

# **Blanchard Forest Strategy Group Recommendations** **All Public Comments Received Through March 6, 2007**

## **Comments Sorted by Document #**

**L** = Letter     **CC**=Comment cards from February 12, 2007 public meeting

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<b>COMMENT CARDS</b>			
CC-1	Mark Herrenkohl	Bellingham Resident	I support the Blanchard Forest Strategies Group agreement, with particular emphasis on Part II – acquisition of private timber lands or conservation rights. This is very important to maintain a working forest in the Chuckanut Mountains. Also, the Concerned Neighbors of Lake Samish, which I’m a participant, would like to be on the Blanchard Forest Advisory Committee. We care very much about the future of Blanchard and Chuckanuts.
CC-2	S. Parker		I feel that the current recommendations allow too much logging and not enough protected area. The very extensive trails in the area will be destroyed by the roads and clear cuts. Blanchard is the last area people can reach from Bellingham or Mount Vernon by bike and enjoy. Thanks.
CC-3			Save the trees.
CC-4			No shooting! No trash dumping! No off roaders! No motorized! No nature rapers!
CC-5			I support the BSG agreement; I wish the core were larger and hope the Commissioner will build flexibility for a larger core in the future. I commend the idea of compensating the trusts with expanded public ownership. I support careful silviculture to improve wildlife habitat. I’m impressed with the outcome of this collaborative process and thank all those involved. This is by far the best possible plan considering all of the threats to this area.
CC-6			Timber harvest should not be allowed in pristine areas as Blanchard Mountain! Other states operate without this revenue. Why can’t Washington move into the 20 <sup>th</sup> century and change its law concerning this State income. Too many forests have been cut, too many natural resources lost. Let’s stop here and try not to manage what is able to sustain its own.
CC-7	Nancy Marston - Quivey		I use Blanchard Mountain trails for hiking 2-3 x per week. I want as much land as possible left uncut for myself; my family and the people of the area to preserve the beauty and habitat of the area. These “managed” forest cuts destroy undergrowth and leave forests where little wildlife can survive. With the huge amount of population growth in the area we need as much uncut forest lands as possible. Not less.
CC-8			I am dismayed that we seem more concerned with appearances than with ecological and habitat

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			protection. Why do we protect people from the consequences of their consumption by hiding clear cut areas out of view, exactly where our most elusive species remain? I would like to see the entire area protected from logging and was in support of a previous plan to trade this DNR revenue land for another revenue source – perhaps in a second or third growth or less environmentally sensitive area. That said I am happy to have any of this spectacular area protected and am in support of an agreement that provides absolute protection from logging for as much of these lands as possible. If this is the best we can do then so be it.
CC-9			Why are we still funding our county services with this exhaustible resource as we have for over 100 years, as though we have an endless supply of forest? We need to come up with more creative ways to fund our schools and hospitals that doesn't destroy other resources in our community.
CC-10			Blanchard Mountain is a gem! There is so much protected non-island state land in King County and Snohomish, so little in Skagit. What other better place to start redressing this imbalance than Blanchard?
CC-11			A precious gem let the people take care of it.
CC-12 CC-22 EM-62	Ann Brooking, MA	Mother of two Edison Students, Bow Hill Resident	<p><b>Comment Card (CC-12)</b></p> <p>I am impressed that so much time and effort have gone into this. I appreciate the various aspects to the management of the forest. Having said this, I vote for preserving as much forest as possible. I recently rode my bike down the British Army trail &amp; it is beautiful and a great ride. I hope that it can be incorporated into the Core. At least the trail.</p> <p>The Trust land model is outdated. We need to move on. Change needs to happen. It will be difficult and will take time, there is no doubt. But to pit our children's schooling against the preservation of a relatively small area of forest is unwise. We need to prioritize education, but should not cut forest of such value as it is to support education. Please conserve as much as possible.</p>

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			<p>You all have done an amazing thing working with one another and I am heartened to see opposing views working together. Wow.</p> <p><b>Comment Card (CC-22)</b>  This is my second note tonight. I would like to ask that selective cutting be done between Oyster Dome and British Army Trail rather than regeneration (clear-cutting) cutting. It would preserve the view from the dome and the quality of forest by the trail which is beautiful. Thank you so much!!!</p> <p><b>Email (EM-62)</b>  I appreciate Blanchard Forest Strategies Group's hard work, but the plan needs to better protect upper Blanchard Mountain. It is inappropriately influenced by logging interests and short-term gain. Instead, Blanchard's management ought to be based on a long-term, comprehensive balance of economic, recreational, public health and biological factors.</p> <p>My children attend Edison School and I volunteer there. The cry to cut trees to support schools angers me. Schools need our support. Let's cut back on road construction and put our money where our mouth is. Children will benefit more from a nearby intact forest than from the temporary, piecemeal portion of the budget that a few trees will provide.</p> <p>The area between Oyster Dome and British Army trail is slated for clear cutting. This is one example of how the plan does not preserve resources valuable to the frequent users of Blanchard. Selective cutting here would preserve the aesthetic view of Mt. Baker from Oyster Dome and the forest experience of the British Army Trail.</p> <p>We need beauty. Emerson stated, "Flowers and fruits are always fit presents; flowers because</p>

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			they are a proud assertion that a ray of beauty outvalues all the utilities of the world.” Let’s shift our values from production and growth to intentional and carefully thought-out development and preservation. Our natural resources are finite; our grandchildren need us to see the big picture.
CC-13			Management and Balance - Manage the human use on the mountain -Leave the forest to its own and you have balance! The only addition that I can think of being useful may be informative Nature Trails. Timber harvest should be done somewhere else.
CC-14			With the population in the Whatcom/Skagit County area expanding at the rate it is, Blanchard Mountain will be used in an increased rate as well. Habitat encroachment is what has caused the extinction or reduction in population of many species to the point at which they must be placed on threatened or endangered species lists. In my opinion the best strategy would be to forget any logging. Looking at your maps, your buffer zones are too small to protect the water ways and your regeneration harvests are essentially clear cut which would devastate the flora & Fauna on Blanchard.
CC-15			The Core area should become part of Larrabee State Park for the people of future.
CC-16			A very nice presentation; but it’s still a giveaway of public land to the logging interests. It’s wrong.
CC-17	Bob Wiesen		#1 No net loss of working forest acreage #2 Harvested areas provide habitat for some species #3 We need to develop an economic model that shows the benefits to the community of keeping working forest lands (jobs, etc.)
CC-18			Supportive of recommendations. Urbanization/growth are an issue. Working forest is solution. Understand balance needed.
CC-19 EM-57	Llyn Doremus	Chairperson, Mount Baker Group, Sierra	<b>Comment Card (CC-19)</b> The agreement/recommendations should include stronger provisions for protection of the environmental and recreational values of Blanchard Mountain. In specific, no new roads should

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		Club	<p>be constructed.  There should be habitat corridors protected between Blanchard and the Puget Sound and Larrabee State Park and the core area should be expanded to 2,400 acres to accomplish this. The Forest Advisory Board should be composed of members of the public that are not selected by DNR, but by the constituents that they are supposed to represent.</p> <p><b>Email (EM-57)</b>  The following comments on the Blanchard Strategies Group Agreement are from the Mt Baker Group of the Sierra Club (with 1,400 members in Skagit, Whatcom, and San Juan Counties) and express the changes that we believe should be made to the Agreement in determining the future management of Blanchard Mountain. In general we think that the increasing population density all along the Puget Sound Shoreline and its watersheds, especially in Skagit and Whatcom Counties deserves consideration in the management of state lands in that vicinity, and at Blanchard Mountain in particular. As such, there needs to be greater emphasis on preserving natural lands and ecologic systems so that there are some functioning ecosystems remaining within the extensive developed areas that are encompassing the Eastern side of Puget Sound. Management of state of county forest board lands to achieve the goal of prolonging conditions that are rapidly changing and disappearing is counter productive. More explicitly, income generation from timber harvest of state lands in urban and suburban areas, when the tax revenues for these communities far exceed the amounts generated by timber sale, and when there are revenue positive impacts to the surrounding communities from the recreational uses of state lands does not serve the people that live near those lands.</p> <p>The Blanchard Strategies Group Agreement discounts the obvious trend towards development in the areas surrounding Blanchard Mountain and the desire on the part of the surrounding residents to manage these lands for recreational and environmental purposes. The need to maintain natural functioning ecosystems only increases as the aerial extent of those functioning</p>

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			<p>systems progressively decreases. We believe the following changes to the Agreement are necessary to reconcile future management of Blanchard Mountain with the realities of land use in western Skagit County, in the Blanchard Mountain vicinity and to preserve the existing natural ecosystems that in their current intact state.</p> <p>The core zone should be expanded to 2,400 acres, as we have advocated for consistently in our communications with DNR over the many years that the Sierra Club has been working on Blanchard Mountain management. Include in the core the areas in the northern and western parts of the management area, so that the opportunities for wildlife and recreational movement to the lands of Larabee Park and the Puget Sound coastline are preserved. Prohibit logging and road construction in the 2,400 acre core.</p> <p>To reduce future controversy, include on the Blanchard Forest Advisory Committee representatives from organizations that are selected by those organizations, and not by DNR. Many of the problems and controversies with the current Agreement could have been avoided if actual representative governing practices were used in assembling the Blanchard Strategies Working Group. In addition, the Advisory Group should include representation from the residents in the Lake Samish, Bow and Edison areas to allow adequate incorporation of local interests in the management of Blanchard Mountain.</p> <p>DNR should now begin to develop a prioritized package of private land acquisitions in the vicinity of Blanchard Mountain so that any funds appropriated by the Washington Legislature can be spent expeditiously.</p> <p>Lastly, it is not within the authority of the Washington Department of Resources, nor in line with the desire of Washington residents, who overwhelmingly supported the Northwest Forest Plan, to promote increased logging on National Forests. For expediency, as well as clarity,</p>

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			<p>Section II, parts C, D and E of the Agreement should be deleted.</p> <p>Thank you for your consideration of the priorities of the Sierra Club in relation to Blanchard Mountain in determining its future management. Those of us who have spent years of our lives working to protect this Mountain in its current state will continue to work with DNR or in opposition to DNR, depending on the vision that the management plan presents. We expect that DNR will consider that management of this last wild area adjacent to the shoreline of Puget Sound is important to Sierra Club members, the residents of Western Washington and the wildlife and natural systems that we all depend upon for our health and well being in deciding the future of Blanchard Mountain.</p>
CC-20			<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Preserve our rural connection to the lands. No one is more tied to the land than those who depend on it for their livelihood. These people want their life style preserved for future generations: Stand Up Timber Towns!</li> <li>2) What is being done to manage the recreational impact? For example, people are allowed in the bat caves all year, what about the bats?</li> </ol>
CC-21			<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) It appears that this group was hand-picked to provide the least amount of (less-than-obvious) resistance to shutting down a good working forest. The next time the DNR conducts this type of process, it would be nice if school districts and junior stake holders had some representation.</li> <li>2) The capital state forest is a good, functional working model for this kind of “alternative use.” It looks like the DNR is trying to reinvent a perfectly good wheel.</li> <li>3) Nothing short of steep recreational user fees will replace the loss of trust value in this plan.</li> </ol>
CC-22 (See CC-12)			

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CC-23			I understand the need for compromise, and am even willing to give up some of the recreation, habitat, beauty, etc. That the area provides. However the vague language describing the proposed management of the tiny core is not acceptable. If the core is to be preserved as part of a proper and just compromise, specific language must be used to avoid a road-filled, selectively logged wasteland of broken promises.
CC-24	Becky Haines	Member of Whatcom BackCountry Horsemen & Hiker & Ferndale Resident	Please keep Blanchard Mountain open to all non-motorized groups. For generations to use of all ages. It's very important for everyone to do their part – help to maintain. Thank you for all your hard work.
CC-25			I admire the efforts of the Strategy Group. My main concern is the preservation of this unique environmental corridor from the salt water to the Cascade Mountains. Secondary is my concern that the dollars gained for the schools and other beneficiaries is fairly insignificant and that we could find ways of getting those dollars without destroying this unique area.
CC-26			Change name to “Chuckanut Forest.” Everyone recognizes “Chuckanut” A beautiful Native term.
CC-27			Thank you for providing the public an opportunity to speak and be heard regarding our public land, Blanchard Mountain. The northwest will only continue to be more and more populated as people continue to be drawn to the jewel that is the Pacific Northwest. And it is unique to be able to live so near to nature, to be able to hike through beautiful old forests and experience the creatures it supports. I am 52. I was born in Anacortes and have seen enormous changes to Whidbey Island, Bellingham, Skagit Valley. The ever encroaching populations, industries, malls, stores – what draws such numbers of people to live here is altered irrevocably by their



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			<p>presence. More impact, more pollution, more cars, a bigger footprint and less and less nature. And now it is proven: global warming is a result of this very process. My whole life I have cherished the Chuckanut Mountains and what a respite they are for all these people – and I always have included Blanchard Mountain in this, and am struck by its unique location and the recreation this area affords.</p> <p>The thought that it will now be divided by logging roads, with sections clearcut and areas “thinned” to as few as 20 trees per are, leave a “core” like a park and logging all around. There are Bear, Cougar, even an endangered water bird, the Marbled Murrelet, that live on Blanchard. And there is a raven rookery and who knows what else this last haven affords. The Chuckanuts are now divided and subdivided – where will these animals go? And where will the people who need to get away from all this encroachment find a refuge from the endless development?</p> <p>Please – stop logging this last precious place and see that the value will exponentially increase as an old growth to our children, a bio-mass of air producing trees, than as ¼ of 1% revenue to the schools – that house the future. What are we leaving them??</p>
CC-28 EM-29 L-3	Elizabeth Zebold	Bow Resident	<p><b>Comment Card (CC-28)</b>  I strongly object to any proposal which leaves any room for road building in the core conservation area!!! If the core conservation area is the sugar that makes the medicine go down let’s not spoil it with the potential of road building.</p> <p><b>Email (EM-29) and Letter (L-3)</b>  I am writing concerning the proposed logging on Blanchard Mountain in Skagit County. I am encouraged by the discussions regarding this area; however I am disappointed with the vagueness and the short-sightedness of the proposed management plan. The plan does not specifically address the need for conservation, wildlife habitat preservation, or intrinsic value. I strongly encourage more specific language that supports environmentally sound logging</p>

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			<p>practices and shows how this proposal is truly different, reflecting the interests and values of our growing community, not just the timber industry.</p> <p>Blanchard Mountain is unique, not only geologically, but as an island of intact mature forest in the wave of increasing population and development in the surrounding areas. As we can see by overwhelming public outcry, the values of the people in these surrounding communities reflect the shift in our greater social awareness which favors environmental conservation. It is time for governmental agencies such as the DNR to adapt to the changing times and respond appropriately. The Blanchard Forest Advisory Committee which will oversee management of the area should not be appointed by the DNR but should but should be broad based to reflect the changing values of the community and allow for true representative government.</p> <p>It is imperative to establish a permanently protected reserve area for passive recreation and habitat conservation that is based on biological, ecological and recreational values, not just access to timber. I support the Sierra Club's recommendation to increase in the conservation area to 2,400 acres with a goal of expanding this area as resources and support allow.</p> <p>Because the revenue that actually goes to the Burlington-Edison School District is so insignificant, less than ¼ of 1%, it seems mere rhetoric to continue citing it as a major point in support of logging (and I have 2 children at Edison Elementary). Supporting schools with timber revenue apparently is not effective and obviously is not sustainable.</p> <p>It is time for change; time to acknowledge our need for intact natural areas and time to consider the long term consequences of our actions. It would be tragic to lose such a unique and irreplaceable resource. Thank you.</p>
CC-29			I hope eventually more forest land inside the managed area (in addition to the 1600 acres) can be set aside for habitat and low impact recreation without logging. This is an amazing place and more should be set aside (and joined with the Whatcom County Lands).
CC-30			A moratorium from logging should be put into effect until a comprehensive unbiased scientific

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			<p>assessment of the area is completed. In addition, no new roads should be undertaken in the 4,800-acre Blanchard Forest site until scientific assessment is completed and presented to we the citizens of Washington State. Absolutely no logging practices should occur 1,000 feet up and from end to end of the shorelines. Please take into consideration protection of biodiversity.</p> <p>Require usage fees for birders, recreationalists, and tours. Gain revenue for the State &amp; County &amp; schools via tapping into sales taxes and permits from the 60,000 visitors to the area to see this unique area. Input a visitor's "shed" center.</p> <p>Protect the Marbled Murrelet – no logging period in the nestling areas and 1,000 feet beyond.</p>
CC-31			<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Maps presented at the open house were vague. I came to see which areas would be clear cut, which areas thinned &amp; where the logging roads would be constructed. I couldn't determine this from the maps.</li> <li>2) It appears the discontinuous areas to be logged have ignored the biological/ecological aspects.</li> <li>3) Roads invite crime and totally defeat the feeling of escaping from the city to enjoy natural beauty.</li> <li>4) The forested area should not be chopped up with sections in the middle that are logged.</li> </ol>
CC-32	Bob Dickinson	Samish Island	I have hiked and biked Blanchard Mountain for the past 15 years and chose to retire here because of my love for the outdoors here. Of all the area local to my home on Samish Island, I go to Blanchard Mountain and Oyster Dome for recreation. The worst parts of any transits through the Chuckanuts and Blanchard Mountain are the hot and exposed logged areas. Please preserve this area for recreation.
CC-33			Please share the benefits for ever.
CC-34			The core is very important from a habitat standpoint – biology. Roads are very damaging and quite permanent. Road development needs to be as minimal and incremental as possible.

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CC-35			More scientific versus financial research needs to be done. Also, if this was a contract, I would never sign it. Full of loop holes. However it's a good start, please continue.
CC-36			As a frequent hiker on Blanchard Hill, I have dreaded the thought of logging taking place there. However, I think the plan makes sense. I am especially interested in the proposal to create a trail that would link the Blanchard trail system with Larrabee State Park. May that trail construction be a high priority!
CC-37 EM-21	Kris Berger	Bellingham	<p><b>Comment Card (CC-37)</b>  I'm opposed to the agreement – it could be so much better! Core area needs to be larger (the ~2400 acres above the road) it needs to be protected (no new roads and no thinning or cutting) and stop trying to sign us up for logging duty! (The language about supporting logging in the Finney Block, etc.) Since there's been so much passion for so long now (nearly 20 years) to save Blanchard, why don't we? Save Blanchard.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Governor Gregoire has a clear mandate for the Greater Puget Sound Shoreline Now is the time.</li> <li>2) Shoreline Alliance is pursuing 10 new parks Now is the time.</li> <li>3) DNR's mission must change – we can't keep logging our most precious state lands (the schools receive relatively little funds from logging). We need to re-think how we manage our state lands – let's pay attention to revenues from recreation! Now is the time, together we can save Blanchard Mountain.</li> </ol> <p><b>Email (EM-21)</b>  I am writing regarding Blanchard Mountain and the Blanchard Strategies Group's proposed agreement.</p> <p>After wrangling with the public over Blanchard Mountain for nearly 20 years, you must know how much passion there is for this special place and how dedicated citizens remain to its</p>

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			<p>protection. The BSG's proposal falls far too short of any real protection for Blanchard, and is therefore unacceptable.</p> <p>In order to even begin to secure public support for the agreement, the size of the core area must be significantly larger—which takes us back to the Friends of Blanchard Mountain's original proposed area. Also, the corridor from Blanchard to Larrabee State Park's wildlands must be much more substantial than what the BSG has proposed.</p> <p>The requirement for all parties to actively campaign for maintaining and increasing timber harvests in Whatcom and Skagit counties is inappropriate and must be dropped.</p> <p>The upshot here is that we must go back to the drawing board; the conservation aspect of the proposal is so inadequate that the public's trust of the DNR and the BSG has been retracted.</p> <p>And so I'll argue this: <i>The very best thing we can do for Blanchard Mountain is to save it.</i></p> <p>There are other timber lands available to supply the revenues Blanchard would have generated. There are mechanisms and initiatives to accomplish this—the Shoreline Alliance and the proposed Chuckanut Mountains Park District are just two. And the Governor has set a crystal clear mandate for the Greater Puget Sound Shoreline. How much of a head start we would have by protecting this unique coastal forest NOW, rather than restoring it later! Respectfully,  Kristine D. Berger</p>
CC-38			Protect it! No logging in the core area! No raid on the MBS!
CC-39			Need a connection down to the sound on the NW side of the property.
CC-40			It appears that a significant amount of effort has been put forth to mitigate the various group inputs into concert. One group that seems to be lacking is those representing science. We have

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			seen in this country our federal-level Administration's lack-of response to scientists, regarding the global-warming issue. Will we repeat this in regards to Blanchard Mountain? I would like to see a greater viewpoint, by those whose interests lay in the intellectual realm, to complement those I have heard from strictly economic/recreational interests. After all, now, according to the U.N report on climate change – the scientists were proven to be the “most right” of all. We citizens of intellect deserve this.
CC-41	Rich Hass	Regional Director US Hand Gliding and Paragliding Association <a href="mailto:richhass@comcast.net">richhass@comcast.net</a>	Thanks for hosting this meeting and helping keep Blanchard open for recreational use.
CC-42			I'm worried about the wildlife corridor. There is only a couple hundred feet that connect the areas from Skagit and Whatcom County.
CC-43	Verea Gebels	Oyster Creek Lane Resident	Are you ready to think outside the box for a moment? Learn from the past and look over your plate's edge? Leave the little pieces of nature and keep it for our children and bring the money for schools from a different source. The law that brings money from logging to schools is antique. Charge 5c/gallen on gas and use it for education and it won't hurt anybody. Other countries (Europe) pay about \$8/gallon. I am not talking about the money this country spends on war.
CC-44			The current use of logging needs to be expanded.
CC-45			Is it really not possible to set aside all of the >40 year old forest as a reserve? Is it not possible to buy 2800 acres of private lands as a “trade” to protect the unique environs of Blanchard Mountain? I am thankful you have opened this to public comment. Please be open to

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			protecting more of the mountain as a legacy to future generations. Thank you very much for the efforts you've put into this.
CC-46			<p>I have hiked Blanchard Mountain most weekends for &gt;15 years. Words are inadequate to express its importance to me. Having grown up among “working forests” (aka clearcuts) I have always had a gut fear of losing B. Mountain’s wonderful forest. Hiking clearcuts ... it’s not just a selfish thing. It’s seeing the loss of habitat, displaced wildlife, etc. that really makes it wrenching. (I say even as I write on paper).</p> <p>So I was greatly heartened to learn that DNR had created the Strategies Group. And I am heartened to learn some of the positive angles, such as working to prevent the loss of yet more forest lands to subdivisions! The group deserves kudos and DNR too for hearing our voice (“our” being those for whom Blanchard Mountain is so much more than \$) – and being open to innovative ideas regarding land management.</p> <p>I would much rather the whole forest be preserved...as a 2<sup>nd</sup> growth, self-regenerated jewel. It would be great if more could be set aside. That said, I now understand more of the considerations involved and appreciated the effort to set aside at least the 1,600 acres. I do hope the plan can be flexible in both directions: your literature says it’s open to logging in the future if necessary – please also consider leaving open the possibility of additional protection!</p> <p>My chief concern is wildlife habitat and self-sustained forest health. So, I am supportive of a plan/strategy that takes these into consideration.</p> <p>I hadn’t realized the extent of the pressure on timber lands by private timber companies selling out to developers. I’m very supportive of the acquisition of private logging lands and/or other property on which trophy houses would otherwise sprout.</p>

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			<p>I am also supportive of the strategy in general. I feel a little as if I damn with faint praise – this is born of my love of the mountain as it. But I don't mean to give only faint praise for a strategy as well –fought and well-thought as this. Well, except for the limit of 1600 acres (please don't preclude increasing this) and the timber sale currently flagged seems to include a large area of alder wetland. Your map also seems to confirm this. It's a sensitive area. I hope I'm mistaken. Thank you for going through this process. Please follow through with the recommendations of this group (or with even more trees if possible).</p> <p>I will urge the various law makers to find the funding to implement this unique collaboration of stake holders, county and state. I will also urge my county commissioners to hear the need to set more of this land aside as park land: schools don't benefit that much from the timber funds. Our county will benefit FAR more from a forest reserve.</p>
CC-47			All of Blanchard should be protected, but at least half (or 2,400 acres). This is a very special place close to growing communities, and the need for beautiful natural areas for people and wildlife is going to become greater and grater. We need Blanchard protected now, before it's damaged by more logging. Thank you for having this meeting.
CC-48			Leave the Chuckanut Range alone!
CC-49			<p>This arrangement can only work if all points of agreement are satisfied. The most important point calls for the retention of acres (or productive equivalent) in forest production. Replacement acres should not come from currently productive sites. Non productive USFS lands (not Finney block) should be considered for replacement.</p>
CC-50	David Goehring	Sedro-Woolley resident	I applaud the efforts to compromise, but I sure would like to see a regional recreation area much larger than the one proposed.
CC-51			Let's keep our Natural Resources, forests are one of them. Train carpenters to build with other sources. Look at Europe, Spain for instance, all forests were cut to build the fleet after 500



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			years the mountains are still bare! Let's be wiser!
CC-52			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The core area is too small. It should be at least ½ of Blanchard Mountain.</li> <li>- There shouldn't be any logging in JJ, CC, and B. It should be protected.</li> <li>- The core should include a larger area connecting Blanchard to Chuckanut. The trail between Chuckanut and Blanchard needs a wide un-logged passage.</li> <li>- The core should not be similar to a NRCA, it should be a NRCA.</li> <li>- A meeting like this needs to also be held in Bellingham where many recreational users of Blanchard live. There should be a formal meeting where the public can make official, recorded, attributable comments.</li> </ul>
CC-53			DNR should conduct studies of plant species and wildlife before starting to harvest any timber! Several species are in decline, we can not just take their habitat, because we are too lazy to pay taxes from other sources. One forest cut takes years to re-grow! What is the prediction for the global warming impact? 10-20 years? Sooner? These new trees will be small and might get ruined by major storms. What are we going to do then? Let's be conservative with changing our landscapes at this point. The balance is already off, with a hundred years of logging.
CC-54			So now's the time for the BEHS to get on board and integrate the compromise solution into the curriculum and school activities. Service clubs planting tree; Ag students creating a native plant nursery; Biology students doing biotic surveys, etc. BEHS wants the long-term dollars – why not create a win-win, and get the youth involved in the long-term care of this forest that benefits the schools?!? There are so many positive, potential synergies! Use some of the sustainably harvested wood in the school buildings and special structures that acknowledges this historic accomplishment between sensible use and conservation.
CC-55			I like the overall strategy of trying to come up with a solution that benefits the different points of view. My concern is with the gene-pool area – it is fairly young and of even age. Perhaps different locations with other-aged stands should be set aside for the gene-pool purpose.
CC-56			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- There is no empirical economic cost-benefit analysis provided with this plan. It is</li> </ul>

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			irresponsible to leave out the impacts to the local economy. - What guarantee does the DNR buy through this process that ensures the first timber sale put up is not challenged?
CC-57		A Back Country Horseman member.	I'm not against logging but please keep our trails open to ride. We enjoy riding up on Blanchard
CC-58	RA Miller		Something which bothered me when I was at the planning commission and several other committees was the lack of protections for resource lands. We have no net loss for critical areas and wetlands – why not no net loss for production type timber lands.
CC-59			If we had better education on the value of commercial timber lands, we would not be here tonight.
CC-60	RA Gilda		It appears to me we are putting too much emphasis on preservation and recreation with lack of forethought in sustainable (select) logging. More effort and education could be put into the benefits of logging both sustainable and clear cut. Many of our advisory committee are made up of so called pro environmentalist which are anti??? Thank you.
CC-61	Jeroldine Hallberg	Skagit County	Consider adding the following as replacement lands, either development rights or purchase: Trillium property south of Squire Lake Park, also known as Alger Alps. This proposal is consistent with goals being discussed in the Alger Community Plan.
CC-62	Joan Melcher	Mount Vernon Resident	I think the recommendations are the best that could come out of such a diverse group. They show compromise and a willingness to work together. I'm in favor. I am a hiker and use most of the trails on Blanchard
CC-63		Back Country Horsemen, Whatcom County	I support the DNR & its legal obligation to provide timber revenue to B.E. school district. Please help us keep the trails open for livestock use as we support all user groups.

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		Chapter	
CC-64			It is interesting how your group came to agreement with all the diverse and divergent ideas. Thank you for your effort and time. My main question I would like to make is: After this proposal becomes fact will there be any type of review process to make sure that all of the implementations have been properly established and do you have any "Plan B" if your original plans fail? Also, how will this plan effect the local population living at the base of the Mountain; traffic, litter, noise, run-off, slides form use and overuse!
CC-65	Hudson Dodd	Bellingham Resident	I support the BSG compromise – it is visionary, fair, and heartening for the future...except the provision for a couple of new roads in the protected core, which tips the scale (of fairness/balance) too far toward timber harvest. That provision should be removed from the agreement.
CC-66		Back Country Horsemen	Please keep the trails open for horses, the B.C.H. of Whatcom do help to maintain the trails, and also keep them open for all. Thank you. B.C.H.W
CC-67			I like the core and visual management area concepts. I still think putting a restaurant at the top that is accessed by a tram from Blanchard is a way to bring in revenue and maintain low impact. The tram can transport bikes and hang gliders as well as hikers so they do not have to drive up and impact the logging road. It's done in several places. I'm most familiar with the one in Albuquerque, New Mexico where they did just that – you can only access the restaurant by hiking in from the top of the trailhead (about a mile) or the tram.
CC-68			There is too much logging allowed. I am not against working forests, however I am appalled by logging techniques I see used. Clearcuts are obscene and environmentally devastating. They are never justified. Current practices, where a road goes to every tree for mechanical "harvest" tears up the land as much or more than old "high line" clearcuts. We log like third world countries are logged. I could support working forests if we used Japanese or European logging practices. Until then you have my strident opposition.
CC-69	Ryan		While I wish the "core" size would be slightly larger, I think that this agreement is an

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	Farncomb		acceptable compromise. I am also pleased that this agreement will allow further public ownership of adjacent land, preventing development.
CC-70			I object to the subtle propaganda of including the B-E School District logos and photos in the Working Forest recommendation large sign – allocations of funds cover a wide array of needs and it is inappropriate to use the “school angle” as an emotional cue. Badly done!
CC-71	Chuck Nafziger		There is too little forest protected. The recreation and wildlife corridor greenery is inadequate by any standards other than “subsidize the loggers” standards. Quit holding schools hostage in order to subsidize logging while turning our environment into a wasteland.
CC-72			<p>Thank you all for your exhibits and presence Monday evening. We drove south (in our hybrid) through the beautiful Skagit Valley to attend. We saw Mount Baker’s peak and in between, hills with elements, dying forests, machine shops, etc. from the SR-11, oil refinery, cars and trucks. Where is the science?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Earth, as the mother, provides eggs and nest, flowing water</li> <li>• Sky, as the father, provides seed and sustenance, falling water in Air. Ours</li> <li>• Our mother earth is covered in incisions yet to heal, bald spots with parasites thriving, vital arteries of life blood blocked dammed polluted exploited: our rivers.</li> <li>• Our father sky is overheating, his temper rising. He brings more ravaging storms to an already weakened invalid. His clouds are smog. Where are your scientists. Every part of Earth deserves nature and careful grooming.</li> <li>• Men with hydraulic power are still too heavily hacking away fro obviously dwindling returns. Bring on the science.</li> <li>• Let us not forget how big, just how big and old those old growth trees were. Let us not forget acres of clams, nets full of fish, rushing waters, glaciers meeting the sea. Clear waters.</li> <li>• As for the Sky, air quality – His atoms have been split, his frequencies disturbed. He doesn’t breathe well and is often noisy and offensive. The heat from the Sun is not able to</li> </ul>

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			<p>be tempered – it’s burning earth’s core. Let us not forget bird song, pungent woodsy fragrances, snow and mist. We all share this obligation, to nurture and groom. Stewardship.</p> <p>Hopefully to live up to its very name, DNR will consist mostly of Resourceful Naturalists in its Department; scientists in ecology, botany, geology, geography, meteorology, oceanography, etc. How are you that much more beholding to the logging, building and timer industries than you are to science? How can you assume the forests owe and create revenue? They are sick, can’t you see? These forests should be in hospital! Listen to people who study the earth and sky, not their plunderers! These users will continue to take and take. Stand firm! They’ll try and confuse you, use you for profit. Do what is right and be careful. Look at the satellite photos. Look from the top of the hills and mountains. Blue and green is what we should see – contours teaming with life and clouds. The ugliness and death to the natural diversity resulting from tree cutting need to be stopped, now. What forest is left, groomed: freed from invasive plant species not their native trees! It takes hundreds of years to grow these trees. Don’t be fouled by this “renewable” management rhetoric. Science is there. Look and listen. Resist urbanity.</p>
CC-73			<p>Much appreciate your efforts. However, I’d like you to please try to save more of the forest from logging and development! It’s such a small area already between the salt water and mountains and I-5. It all deserves complete protection in order to maintain habitat for living things. Vancouver and Seattle are growing. Resist! Thank you.</p>
CC-74			<p>Those logging families have had plenty of time to figure out other ways of making a living than this logging. It’s been decades we can see how much has been taken and what and how long it takes to grow back. Go out and get a real job! Tell ‘em! Get outta our forest with yer machinery. Peace.</p>
CC-75			<p>We need all the trees we can to help keep the diversity necessary to regenerate oxygen back into the system of air to breathe. “photosynthesis”</p>

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CC-76			Can't someone suggest a solution to the invasive holly and ivy that plagues even the deep woods where there's water? It's killing valuable trees!! Taking over! It's very unsightly and embarrassing. Doesn't Belong getting more hold. It's toxic. And very virile.
CC-77	Tim Volwiler	Bellingham Resident	I support the Blanchard Strategies Agreement, and would like to thank all group members for their efforts to reach compromise. I would like to see an expanded core and some scenic and wild buffers on avenues to reach the core and scenic viewsheds along Chuckanut Drive, but am willing to live with the plan as currently presented. Thanks to all for their cooperation and patience in dealing with a sometimes irate public on this issue.
CC-78			The visual beauty of this still fairly "natural zone" is tainted major-ly by logging's harmful operations. It looks bad, besides robbing wild animal and bird habitat, plus recreational joy. Keep it in conifers (big one), remove ivy and holly, blackberry and Scot's brooms. Yuck!
CC-79			Blanchard Forest should all be a natural buffer zone between Seattle and Vancouver/ Bellingham. Its watersheds, even though there's a rail road track, are essential to the health of Puget Sound. All of Samish Bay is affected, the farmlands below. It should all be a park. Thank you.
CC-80			Really appreciate all your "doings" in allocating forest land, efforts! You folks do need to be looking at the entire watershed, however, in regards to the restoration of health and life in Puget Sound. 1600 at the top is hardly enough ... One ecological example: Eagles need big trees near the sea for nesting and fishing. Since they are making a come back it would be hospitable of us to help provide them with large trees. These are Big Birds! Please advise against cutting the trees. So much wild life is lost already. No road carrying logging equipment will disappear in a year!! Really! Get Real!
CC-81			It's a lot of words attractively and intelligently presented. I've enjoyed my communications and friendships with folds in the logging business in the last 50 years. Thrills! However, 50 years ago, I also enjoyed the forests which aren't there anymore...What endures is my love and enjoyment of the mountains and sea, islands, beaches, crab, salmon (not parties at the

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			Weyehausers). Washington used to be the Evergreen State! BSG needs more people scientifically trained in ecological phenomena. Basing the plan on available timber is wrong. Your next “canary in you coal mine” is this marbled murrelet bird. You’ll get “bio” diversity in these comments. Try harder to keep it in the woods!
CC-82			<p>“Win-win” says the NW Conservancy portion of this in Bellingham’s Herald. How this journal=eze creeps into important decision making! Hopefully, the developers with their spastic machines will be more regulated and shut down. I hope they lose! This much of your efforts I appreciate.</p> <p>As a frequent recreationalists on Blanchard Mountain, I feel very defeated when I can’t get to the trail on account of there is a logging operation in effect! It’s not just the squirrels and deer losing, it’s all of us! That pittance of a revenue for the schools will hopefully make kids smarter to detect your diversion tactics! But the forest is losing now! Forever! Please increase your conservation and scientific input!! Or “lose-lose-lose”...</p>
CC-83			There’s already your train track. While you’re listening, hear the loud whistle in the night. Smell the fuel burning. Feel the earth shake. See the forest go by in board feet. What “won the west” won’t necessarily “sustain it” how we like it! Bull dozers??? Vs. toothpicks!!! Peace 24-7 would be the ideal, you know. Lumber jacks – right ... times change!
CC-84			It’s a good idea to take special care in allowing any logging on any public land. This land is our Land! You should be aiming your efforts at cleaning up this public land where it is hurt, polluted, and rapidly growing with English Ivy and other lethal invasives, as you would your children if hurt or diseased. Your efforts to at least begin change in this matter are really appreciated. Specifically, the Recommendations seem too dominated by this relatively small matter of revenue and thus too heavily dominated by the logging industry. Inlays, overlay, outlays, confuse the public and make them believe your helping the environmental causes, but, watershed, run off, wildlife population and human recreational interests should be studied and

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			followed more!!! Restoration not destruction.
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## **E-MAILS**

EM-1	Carol J. Sturtevant	Chairman, Cloudbase Country Club, Chapter #37, United States Hang Gliding and Paragliding Association	<p>For decades, Blanchard Hill has been a popular location for hang glider pilots to launch and soar. Pilots have treated the Blanchard Forest gently; we tread lightly on the land, leave the area cleaner than we find it, participate in work parties and do our best to work with the DNR and other landowners in ways that show our appreciation for the beauty of the area and the opportunity to pursue our passion of free flight. Many members of our community participate in local events, assist our landing zone's owner with upkeep of his property and patronize the local businesses while we are in the area to fly.</p> <p>It is the hope of the Northwest hang gliding community that the DNR and the Blanchard Forest Strategy Group will recognize hang gliding as having a low negative impact and a significant positive impact on the land and the community, and will specifically include hang gliding as an approved activity at our current launch site on Blanchard Hill and in general within the Blanchard Forest.</p>
EM-2 EM-2	David Goehring	President, Nordic Tugs	<p><b>Email (EM-1)</b>  I applaud the Department's willingness to compromise, but why in heaven's name can't some of the DNR's thousands of acres be traded for the Blanchard Mountain trust lands so that more if not all of the Chuckanut tracts can be devoted to parkland. Unbelievable. This is an opportunity to set aside a world class recreation area in the midst of a rapidly developing urban area. Can we PLEASE use a little more foresight.</p> <p><b>Email (EM-2)</b>  As a longtime resident of Skagit County, I have to tell you that I am appalled and disgusted at the idea of further logging on Blanchard Mountain. What on earth are you people thinking?</p>



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			<p>We have the opportunity here to preserve a regional recreational area that compares to the Tiger Mountain complex in King County. Our region is becoming increasingly urban, with more and more open space being converted to housing and commercial activity. Blanchard Mountain is a superb recreational site, let alone a wildlife haven that should be preserved intact.</p> <p>With all the 1000's of acres of less sensitive property that the DNR owns or manages, we can't find another way to replace the meager financing that the proposed logging would provide to the school district and the county? What a travesty it is that you are proposing. I hope to high heaven that more reasonable, sensible people than have thus far held sway will ultimately prevail on this issue. Count me as one of those.</p>
EM-4	Jon Miller		<p>We strongly support the Blanchard Strategies Agreement about the DNR land on Blanchard Mt. that the conservation community, timber interests, recreation advocates and Skagit County have agreed upon.</p> <p>We often hike the PNW trail and would much rather see a working forest with the roadless core protected than other options for the area.</p> <p>This area is heavily used buy many people for hiking and other recreational activities all year long. I live in the area and always see cars parked at the PNW trailhead.</p>
EM-5	Franklin Evantoff	Chuckanut Mountain Parks District	<p>The DNR and the Blanchard Strategy Group (BSG) have proposed a logging plan that will destroy <b>Blanchard Mountain</b> as we know it. I attended ten of the BSG meetings as an observer, and less than two hours were dedicated to conservation. This small island of naturally regenerated native forest that touches the sea is about to become a myriad of logging roads, destroying its present and future value as a recreational haven for 60,000+ visitors annually and home to black bear, cougar, the endangered marbled murrelet, enormous raven rookeries, and endangered species of lichen just to name a few of Blanchard Mountain's treasures. There are better answers to the challenge of supporting the beneficiaries than with revenues from logging.</p>

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			<p>The following is a list of concerns not addressed by the BSG. The Sierra Club and North Cascades Conservation Council, members of the CMPD Advisory Committee, and others share the concerns below. The Sierra Club's "Opposing Views to the BSG" is at the bottom of this email.</p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Points of concern for Blanchard Mountain</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Blanchard Mountain is unique geologically in all of Puget Sound. It is the only place where the Cascade Mountains meet the sea. It rises 1,000 feet at 0.3 miles from the sea, and rises 2,000 feet 1 mile from the shoreline. It is the home of five mountain lakes.</li> <li>• Blanchard Mountain represents the largest remaining mature coastal mainland forest, including old growth, between Vancouver B.C. and Olympia: the only coastal Marbled Murrelet nesting area remaining in the Greater Puget Sound Region.</li> <li>• Blanchard Mountain is an invaluable component for the restoration of Puget Sound and serves a higher value as a permanently protected relic old-growth forest for all citizens and generations to experience, learn from and enjoy forever.</li> <li>• Blanchard Mountain is Public Land: 4800 acres OWNED BY THE CITIZENS OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON and Revocable by Skagit County for park purposes only – Reconveyance was not discussed by the Blanchard Strategies Group.</li> <li>• The BSG process was exclusive, not inclusive, of open community and scientific input. The BSG was hand selected by the Commissioner for Public Lands and the DNR.</li> <li>• There is a blatant lack of consideration in the BSG's proposal for fish &amp; wildlife and supporting habitat (for all life phases). Biodiversity was documented by an earlier study (2002) as the second highest value, but was not given consideration at the BSG.</li> <li>• The BSG agreement underestimates the positive recreational and economic values of not logging Blanchard Mountain. Over 60,000+ people use Blanchard Mt. annually (DNR numbers), generating direct revenues into local economies (both Whatcom and Skagit</li> </ul>

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			<p>counties).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Using Blanchard Mountain as a “demonstration forest for eco-logging” is a poor rationale for increased logging along the I-5 corridor and in the National Forest. Societal values are changing to favor better protection of ecological and recreational values. DNR’s mission needs to adapt accordingly.</li> <li>• Contrary to public perception, the majority of timber revenues generated by logging on Blanchard Mountain do not go to the Burlington-Edison School District. In fact, the revenues generated represent less than 0.25 of 1% of the school district’s annual budget. Supporting schools with timber revenue is not sustainable.</li> <li>• In times of Global Warming and in light of the explosive population growth of this region, the primary responsibility of the DNR should be to protect Blanchard Mountain’s ecological integrity and biodiversity as well as its carbon-sequestering value (pulling carbon dioxide out the air).</li> <li>• The governor has announced a program for the environmental restoration of the Greater Puget Sound Region. If Blanchard Mountain is not logged, it will be unnecessary to expend tax payer funds to restore the damage incurred from logging.</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>Suggestions from those concerned</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Support</i> moratorium from logging until a comprehensive scientific assessment is completed. The BSG agreement will have direct and immediate adverse environmental consequences.</li> <li>• <i>Oppose</i> new roads on Blanchard Mountain until the scientific assessment is completed.</li> <li>• <i>Permanently protect</i> a reserve area for passive recreation and habitat conservation. The 1,600 acre recommended core by the BSG is too small. It is not based on biological, ecological or recreational values, but instead is based on accessible timber.</li> <li>• <i>Protect</i> existing mature forest, other sensitive habitat, and associated corridors for preservation and restoration, including a substantial connecting corridor to Larrabee State Park.</li> </ul>

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			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Find alternative funding</i> to satisfy current fiduciary responsibility to the beneficiaries.</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Blanchard Mountain protected FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS: Priceless !!</b></p> <p>For a complete review of the strategy and supporting documentation visit the DNR website - <a href="http://www.dnr.wa.gov/">http://www.dnr.wa.gov/</a></p> <p><b>Blanchard Forest Strategies Group Agreement – OPPOSING VIEW</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>Mt Baker Group, Sierra Club – February 12, 2007</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. No new roads should be constructed on Blanchard Mountain</li> <li>2. An area of 2,400 acres should be adopted and managed for Natural Resource Conservation Area values.</li> <li>3. The northwest vicinity linking Larabee State Park and the Puget Sound Shoreline with Blanchard Mountain should be restricted from logging, and maintained in a forested state as a habitat corridor.</li> <li>4. Promotion of logging on National Forest Lands, specifically in the Finney Block, is outside the scope of this agreement, and is opposed.</li> <li>5. The Blanchard Forest Advisory Committee should not be appointed at the whim of DNR, as the Blanchard Strategies Group was. Otherwise DNR will be able to stack the committee with members who will provide a “rubber stamp” approval of anything DNR proposes for Blanchard Mountain timber harvest and management. This is NOT representative government.</li> <li>6. Restrict logging on Blanchard to the south and eastern most areas for 5 to 10 years to allow conservationists the opportunity to assemble resources to expand the core protected area.</li> </ol>

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			7. No support for “securing sustainable timber supply in Skagit or Whatcom Counties”. This is a job for the DNR, not for private citizens who want to maintain State Lands for recreational and environmental purposes.
EM-6	Mark Miller	Seattle Resident	Please place me on your mailing list for notifications for any meetings, decisions or anything else relevant to the management of Blanchard Forest. Thanks.
EM-7	Chris Sandvig		I am writing in support of the Blanchard Strategies Agreement. Blanchard is a very popular recreation area and its low elevation and proximity to several urban areas makes it an ideal area for recreation. I am a frequent hiker and mtn. biker on Blanchard and think it should be preserved as a natural area for future generations.  I support an appropriation of at least \$7 million from the Capital Budget Bill to implement the Blanchard Strategies Group agreement. Thank you.
EM-8	Sonja Wingard	Backcountry Horsemen	Blanchard Mountain is a very special place for people to get out into nature without having to drive a long distance. Trails are already developed so that part is already done. We just have to make a concerted effort for our future generations to preserve a good chunk of this forest for its natural beauty will never be replaced once lost to sprawl. Forest Strategies Group has proven we can work together to help protect land and our way of life. Thanks so very much.
EM-9 L-10	John F. Bremer, Sr.	Lake Samish Association Samish Water District Advisory Committee	While disappointed that more acreage is not protected in the now publicized proposed settlement, I'm concerned that existing unofficial trail routes will not be protected since, as I understand, only the top of Blanchard Hill and some corridors (?) are protected in the proposed settlement. Old trails and tracks that exist along the drainages flowing from the north and west to eventually combined to enter Oyster Creek somewhat below the south edge of DNR land would be protected with expanded canopy width.  Ideally, an enhanced canopy would be extended to include all five categories of the old (?)

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			<p>stream classification. Of special concern is the combined drainage from Lizard and Lilly Lakes and the drainages forming the next creek, unofficially Piling Creek, so called because of the old rail bed pilings which extend some quarter mile in the creek bed. The combined flow at this point also appears to be the upper point for salmon fingerlings from the Oyster Creek run, at least during minimum summer flow. Just beyond the next turn to the south, so called Kratzman's corner, (named for the adjacent land owner whose water works piping extends all the way up unto the Lily-Lizard cataracts), and shown on maps as supporting a wetland, Ditch Creek (so called because of road ditches near the start of its drainage on the Skagit-Whatcom border) joins the flow. Only the flow from Right Angle Creek (named for its defining turns) is added, before these four major drainages join Oyster Creek.</p> <p>Trail routes exist along all major segments of these creeks and their tributaries, as well as Oyster Creek. The Oyster Creek trail on the east side of the creek extends all the way to the next logging road (the original logging road from Lake Samish that crosses the Chuckanut ridge just beyond Lost Lake, and is a primary east-west route for hiking, biking and horseback riding. The east bank Oyster Creek trail (old logging way) appears to serve as a major segment of the proposed Lost-Lizard Trail, of which DNR agreed to in the Chuckanut Trails Master Plan. Though not in creek canopy protection, the trail proceeds pasts the Oyster Creek cataracts in an area that is marked for logging -Green Drake). I have previously requested that consideration be given to not logging the route in this area. While the Proposed Lost-Lizard trail route climbs to the level of Oyster Creek above the falls and cataracts, one can continue north out of DNR land and on various routes reach the Pine and Cedar Lakes ridge.</p> <p>Returning to Blanchard. A major concern is the new pink tagging of some trees, numbered in the 130's and 140's, along a trail route, used for some 40 years, that is on the west side of the small creek that the Lilly-Lizard cataracts tumble into, and represents the vicinity where the proposed Lost-Lizard trail would cross. What is the significance of this tagging? If it denotes</p>

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			<p>trees to be logged, how is that related to the proposed settlement? The creek in question is a mile or so from the end of the lowest logging road on the west side of Blanchard. This route was once part of the logging rail bed that crossed the combined Lilly and Lizard creeks at the point of their confluence just above the cataracts. South of this point the old rail bed makes a wonderful hiking route for a mile or so until it reaches the ravine of so called 'Right Angle Creek', the south side of which trails down into Oyster Creek Valley. It should definitely receive major consideration for not logging given its trekking, scenic and historic value, and connector value to other routes and trails.</p> <p>Another concern is for the fate of a very large red cedar, perhaps as much as 16 feet around in the proposed U7 Green Drake 'hard logging' section. It is the not designated with a yellow 'save this tree' sign in the 'special management unit' of that vicinity, but has bluish-purple scribble lines on its base. I think it would be a travesty to cut down what is undoubtedly the largest tree in the Chuckanuts, and propose you negate its cutting. Thank you for whatever consideration you can given to these concerns. I have included some detail hoping it might be useful in any final settlement. I alone am responsible for any inaccuracies, and do not represent an official position of the association or the water district.</p>
EM-10	Steven Noble		<p>I want to say that I support the Blanchard Strategies Agreement. Although, I would like to see no logging done in the Chuckanuts I think this is the best solution put forward considering the threat to the area. I prefer preservation to sprawl because once it is gone....it is gone...forever and this area is a real treasure for the not only Whatcom and Skagit counties but for all of Washington. There are few better viewing points that standing atop Oyster Dome looking out over the forest to the bay and the San Juan Islands with the final backdrop the Olympic mountains. Please support this agreement. Thank You.</p>
EM-11	Lynne Kunze Berg	Bow Resident	<p>I am writing this letter in support of the Blanchard Strategies Agreement. This area is very important to me, as I live at the Eastern base of Blanchard Mountain and walk and hike there</p>

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			<p>almost daily. My teenage children and their friends spend a lot of time hiking up to the bat caves and to Lilly and Lizard Lakes and I am thankful that they have this opportunity literally right out their back door!</p> <p>I believe that this agreement is the right solution for our future as areas such as these are essential for our upcoming generations. Thank you.</p>
EM-12	Brett Baunton		<p>We feel there needs to be more forest protected in the Chuckanuts than the current proposal. Please consider protecting more of this incredible land, so close to the sea and Bellingham.</p>
EM-13	Jessie Sauer		<p>I wish that when you consider the future of this mountain that you realize how many generations could use this site as we have been fortunate to. The idea of more trees being cut down for money is such a bad one. Money comes and goes and the premise you live by needs to change. What about the carbons that this last stand of trees is holding. Bellingham is known for it's clean air quality this must partially due to this last forest frontier.</p> <p>There is so much building and construction going on in our valued North Sound. I fear that this is to become another Federal Way, North Seattle area. Areas now know for its congestion, bad air and over population. People come from far around to enjoy the last of the benefits of forest meets sound. There are so many other areas that have state trees left to cut, you need to focus on possible other methods for revenues.</p> <p>Tree cutting could possibly be the end all end, once these are down there seems to be no future for this kind of revenue for future trust. There are future generations to consider.</p> <p>Take a closer look at what has become of our Puget Sound area, the air quality and the amounts of future growth expected. These kinds of areas are so limited to recreators and our need as humans to interface with nature. Think long and hard as to how revenues can be made for our futures without all the tree cutting now and forever forward.</p> <p>I do hope the people's responses are important as we seem to be the only ones who really care about the future of the land. Thanks for deeper thought process it takes to go beyond what is right in front of you. Jessie Sauer, a North Sound appreciator</p>



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EM-14	Bill Hawk		My name is Bill Hawk and I live in Bellingham and teach in Sedro-Woolley. Blanchard Mt. as a recreation area is very important to me. I appreciate all of the hard work others have done in developing the agreement between all the different user groups. I'm emailing you today to lend my support to the Blanchard Strategies Agreement and urge you all to fund this agreement so it can be implemented. I personally would like to see less logging roads and more hiking and biking trails, but I feel this agreement is a fair compromise for all involved. Thanks.
EM-15	Eric Hirst		I was pleased to read the Friedman & Oliver article in the last week's <i>Cascadia Weekly</i> on the successful efforts to protect Blanchard Mountain. The Blanchard Strategies Group includes a terrific and diverse set of interests. It is remarkable and encouraging that this diverse set of people could reach agreement on difficult and controversial issues. I am delighted that much of Blanchard Mountain will be protected from logging and will remain available for hiking. Although I would have preferred to see a complete ban on logging on Blanchard Mountain, I understand the Department of Natural Resources' need to generate revenues for local school districts.
EM-16	Steve and Helene Irving	Ferndale Residents	<p>Thank you for inviting the public to learn about and comment on the work of the Blanchard Strategy Group. It became very obvious to us that there are a lot of concerned citizens with many points of view.</p> <p>We'd like to take this opportunity to offer our suggestions. Our interests lie in promoting a healthy forest that will offer our grandchildren and their grandchildren an experience of natural habitat rich with wildlife! This would involve doubling the size of the core and making the protection of the core permanent.</p> <p>The protected old growth area north-west of Oyster Creek lies between private land and timber harvest areas. The core must be widened to the east to become an effective corridor for wildlife. Existing old growth must be preserved. Cutting in the core is unacceptable as nature is</p>

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			able to regenerate old growth forests and man has not proven an ability to do this.  The southern-most area which has Marbled Murrelet nesting activity should be much larger than twelve acres. This is the only coastal Marbled Murrelet nesting area remaining in the Greater Puget Sound Region. Enlarging and protecting this area is vital to the survival of these birds. Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

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EM-17	Keith and Janice Wiggers	Burlington Residents	<p>We want to congratulate you and the committee on your Blanchard Mountain Strategies Agreement. We would like to have had more protection, but feel that the compromise that was reached is a very good one. It may be possible to add more protected areas later. However, protecting the important old growth forest for wildlife habitat is the most vital. And protecting the best of the trail system is important for the ever more popular recreational use of that area.</p> <p>We have heard committee members say how well the committee and the DNR worked together through the process. Although a negotiated agreement may not make everyone completely happy, it is the best way to arrive at a solution. We are happy with the process and hope it provides a model in the future to settle disagreements over other controversial areas.</p> <p>In summary:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. We are happy with the agreement and hope that it will become implemented.</li> <li>2. Wildlife is the most important resource that should be protected.</li> <li>3. Public recreational use is also very important.</li> <li>4. Maintaining open space and decreasing urban sprawl into the few remaining open spaces is an increasingly important issue. Thank you.</li> </ol>
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EM-18	Darren Darsey	Cloudbase Country Club, Chapter #37, United States Hand Gliding and Paragliding Association	<p>As a hang glider pilot and photographer Blanchard Mountain holds a special place in my heart. It was the site of my first soaring experience and the natural beauty of its panoramic views and beautiful sunsets has kept me coming back ever since. As part of a community of users that recreate at Blanchard Mountain, my fellow hang glider pilots and I feel an obligation to take care of this site that we cherish so much. Impromptu trash clean-ups have often happen as we wait on the fickle winds to strengthen, allowing us to soar. We tread lightly and soar silently.</p> <p>I is my hope that the DNR and Blanchard Forest Strategy Group will recognize the pilots that fly at Blanchard Mountain as having a positive impact on the area and that we will continue to have the opportunity to silently soar above this beautiful area and to maintain our current launches.</p> <p>I've attached a photo I took at Blanchard that I would like to share with you. Please feel free to use it in regards to Blanchard Mountain.</p>
EM-19	peacelane@net zero.net		<p>I am writing in support of the Blanchard Strategies Group's Agreement. I am living right down the road from Blanchard Mt. and it continues to be one of the most beautiful places to hike and ride horses in the area. I have spent many hours trying to what is possible to save the mountain from being totally logged and am so excited that some agreement can be made to at least save some of it. I also support public ownership as the being the right solution for the future of the Chuckanuts and prefer timberlands to the sprawl approach. Please help make this agreement possible.</p>
EM-20	Heather Heffner		<p>I am writing this in objection to the proposal to log Blanchard Mountain. I would propose to make Blanchard Mountain a permanent recreational area instead. As the reason for logging is an issue of income, then I would suggest working with the "Friends of Blanchard Mountain" organization which already suggests using the Washington State Trust Land Transfer program.</p>

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			Logging would only unnecessarily scar this scenic area and drive potential tourists and the faithful who have visited the Mountain for years away. Forty-five thousand recreational visitors a year is no small number! Thank you.
EM-21 (See CC-37)			
EM-22	Gordon Grice		Thanks very much for the link. If comments are to be submitted to you I would like to suggest that the Northwest Paragliding Club be a named member of the Blanchard Forest Advisory Committee. The NWPC has upwards of 200 members and has a very keen interest in the future of the Blanchard Forest. You can learn more about the club at <a href="http://nwparagliding.com">nwparagliding.com</a> .
EM-23	Kim McNett	Self	I am writing on behalf of Blanchard Mountain, WA. I understand that this is the critical point where decisions about conserving this ecosystem may be final. I have received the DNR strategy plan summary and am not impressed. The public has been ultimately ignored for years in this debate. The power of the timber industry in relation to the public is a disgrace. I am disgusted that so much scientific evidence and valid arguments have been completely ignored. What will it take to reverse the logging process? Based on my experiences with this issue, there is nothing. It doesnt matter how unique a place is, how many people visit it, how many rare and ENDANGERED SPECIES live there, if it's worth some money then kiss it good-bye. I grew up on this mountain. I am this worlds future generation. You are leaving me with wasted resources and an unsustainable future. THANK YOU
EM-24	Danielle Butler	Olympia Resident	I have recently been introduced to Blanchard Mt, and to its plight. This is a unique piece of land, where Cascade forests touch the Puget Sound, home to diverse and rare life. I understand there is a meeting tonight concerning the logging of Blanchard Mt. I am not able to attend but am writing to voice my strong opposition. Thank you.
EM-25	Madeline Sharrow		I have been to Blanchard Mountain to hike on several occasions. The mountain was shown to me by a dear friend who has grown up on and around Blanchard. Through the stories and

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			<p>overall care about the mountain area imparted to me by the people I know from Alger and my own impressions of the beauty and ecological importance of the area I have come to feel very strongly about Blanchard Mountain. The more I learn about the controversy now surrounding the Blanchard Mountain land the more adamantly I feel this land needs to be protected. Here are some reasons why:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>-According the Blanchard Strategies Group, reconveyance was not even discussed as an option for the 4800 acres of public citizen-owned land. The BSG also did not include local or scientific input and the members of the BSG were selected solely by the DNR who want to log the area.</li> <li>-In times of Global Warming, the primary responsibility of the DNR should be to protect Blanchard Mountain's ecological integrity and biodiversity, as well as its carbon-sequestering value (pulling carbon dioxide out the air).</li> <li>-Blanchard Mountain represents the largest remaining mature coastal mainland forest, including old growth, between Vancouver B.C. and Olympia: the only coastal Marbled Murrelet nesting area remaining in the Greater Puget Sound Region.</li> <li>-Blanchard Mountain is an invaluable component for the restoration of Puget Sound and serves a higher value as a permanently protected relic old-growth forest for all citizens and generations to experience, learn from and enjoy forever.</li> <li>-The BSG agreement underestimates the positive recreational and economic values of not logging Blanchard Mountain. Over 60,000+ people use Blanchard Mt. annually (DNR numbers), generating direct revenues into local economies (both Whatcom and Skagit counties).</li> <li>-Contrary to public perception, the majority of timber revenues generated by logging on Blanchard Mountain do not go to the Burlington-Edison School District. In fact, the revenues generated represent less than ¼ of 1% of the school district's annual budget. Supporting schools with timber revenue is not sustainable.</li> </ul> <p>I believe that no logging or road building should be carried out on Blanchard Mountain until a comprehensive scientific assessment is completed. The 1600 acres of Blanchard Mountain</p>

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			<p>which the BSG recommends for a core habitat conservation area are too small. Existing mature forest, other sensitive habitat, and associated corridors for preservation and restoration need to be protected including a substantial connecting corridor to Larrabee State Park. Also, since the governor has announced a program for the environmental restoration of the Greater Puget Sound Region. If Blanchard Mountain is not logged, it will be unnecessary to expend tax payer funds to restore the damage incurred from logging.</p> <p>I hope you will consider these reasons why Blanchard Mountain should remain protected public lands instead of being logged by the DNR.</p>
EM-26 EM-27	Lynne McNett Mary Burgess, MA	Alger Resident	<p>-Please reconsider the importance of protecting Blanchard Mountain!! Lynne McNett</p> <p>-This letter is in support for keeping Blanchard Mountain intact, allowing no further roads, and a plea to the "powers at be" to not move forward on any further development until a comprehensive scientific assessment is completed. THANK YOU! Mary Burgess, MA, CCC-A</p> <p>Form Letter Sent by Both Commenters:          Blanchard Mountain is Public Land: 4800 acres OWNED BY THE CITIZENS OF THE STATE OF WASHINGTON and Revocable by Skagit County for park purposes only – Reconveyance was not even discussed by the Blanchard Strategies Group (BSG).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Blanchard Mountain is unique geologically in all of Puget Sound. It is the only place where the Cascade Mountains meet the sea. It rises 1,000 feet at 0.3 miles from the sea, and rises 2,000 feet 1 mile from the shoreline. It is the home of five mountain lakes.</li> <li>· Blanchard Mountain represents the largest remaining mature coastal mainland forest, including old growth, between Vancouver B.C. and Olympia: the only coastal Marbled Murrelet nesting area remaining in the Greater Puget Sound Region.</li> <li>· Blanchard Mountain is an invaluable component for the restoration of Puget Sound and serves a higher value as a permanently protected relic old-growth forest for all citizens and generations to experience, learn from and enjoy forever.</li> </ul>

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			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· The BSG process was exclusive, not inclusive, of open community and scientific input. The BSG was hand selected by the Commissioner for Public Lands and staged by DNR.</li> <li>· There is a blatant lack of consideration in the BSG's proposal for fish &amp; wildlife and supporting habitat (for all life phases). Biodiversity was documented by an earlier study (2002) as the second highest value, but was not given consideration at the BSG.</li> <li>· The BSG agreement underestimates the positive recreational and economic values of not logging Blanchard Mountain. Over 60,000+ people use Blanchard Mt. annually (DNR numbers), generating direct revenues into local economies (both Whatcom and Skagit counties).</li> <li>· Using Blanchard Mountain as a "demonstration forest for eco-logging" is a poor rationale for increased logging along the I-5 corridor and in the National Forest. Societal values are changing to favor better protection of ecological and recreational values. DNR's mission needs to adapt accordingly.</li> <li>· Contrary to public perception, the majority of timber revenues generated by logging on Blanchard Mountain do not go to the Burlington-Edison School District. In fact, the revenues generated represent less than ¼ of 1% of the school district's annual budget. Supporting schools with timber revenue is not sustainable.</li> <li>· In times of Global Warming, the primary responsibility of the DNR should be to protect Blanchard Mountain's ecological integrity and biodiversity, as well as its carbon-sequestering value (pulling carbon dioxide out the air).</li> <li>· <i>Support</i> a moratorium from logging until a comprehensive scientific assessment is completed. The BSG agreement will have direct and immediate adverse environmental consequences.</li> <li>· <i>Oppose</i> new roads on Blanchard Mountain until the scientific assessment is completed.</li> <li>· <i>Permanently protect</i> a reserve area for passive recreation and habitat conservation. The 1,600 acre recommended core by the BSG is too small. It is not based on biological, ecological or recreational values, but instead is based on accessible timber.</li> <li>· <i>Protect</i> existing mature forest, other sensitive habitat, and associated corridors for</li> </ul>



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			<p>preservation and restoration, including a substantial connecting corridor to Larrabee State Park.</p> <p>· The governor has announced a program for the environmental restoration of the Greater Puget Sound Region. If Blanchard Mountain is not logged, it will be unnecessary to expend tax payer funds to restore the damage incurred from logging.</p>
EM-28	Luanna McNett	Olympia Resident	<p>I am writing in regard to the proposed DNR deforestation strategy for Blanchard mountain. I am sure that you are aware of the issue, and have been receiving public outcries for quite some time. I am yet another resident of Washington state that opposes the timber harvest proposition. Blanchard mountain is an absolutely invaluable area in the greater Puget Sound area. Home to rare and endangered species (lichen <i>Usnea rigida</i>, nesting area of the endangered Marbled Murrelet), if deforested in the manner proposed biodiversity will be permanently jeopardized. Is this, I ask you, sustainable? Does this look in to the best interests of our current and future generations? Does this fall in to play with the governor's "environmental restoration plan for the Greater Puget Sound area?" Blanchard mountain is also the largest stand of secondary growth forests north of Olympia, as well as the only of the Cascades to reach the sound. The 60000 individuals that utilize the area for recreation annually contribute to the surrounding areas economy in an extremely significant, though difficult to monitor way.</p> <p>The people of the greater Puget Sound area recognize that Blanchard mountain is a priceless area. It seems blatantly obvious that the destruction of this ecological gem would be an extremely unjust act. I ask you to please, do your job and stand up for the opinion and interest of the people, not the unsustainable profit driven motives of the DNR. Thank you for you time.</p>
EM-29 (See CC-28)			
EM-30	Steven Harper, PhD	Lake Samish, Bellingham	<p>I am writing to request that you strongly support the Blanchard Strategies Group Agreement and make efforts to support procuring at least \$7 million dollars this biennium to begin the</p>

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		resident, Vice President of Concerned Neighbors of Lake Samish	<p>implementation for the agreement to protect Blanchard Mountain.</p> <p>The agreement is the negotiated settlement to a 10 year struggle between Skagit County and the timber industry and the environmental and recreational community. It is the best solution to protecting the last vestiges of coastal forest in the upper Puget Sound. It protects 1600 acres of the core of Blanchard Mountain (I wish it were larger (approx. 2800 acres)). The agreement also provides strategies to protect against the conversion of commercial forestland adjoining Blanchard Mountain to housing. Being located in a rapidly developing area adjacent to Bellingham makes this area extremely vulnerable to sprawl. It also provides compensation to Skagit County governmental and school taxing districts for the timber dollars that they are losing by being part of the agreement.</p> <p>The agreement is extremely important to protecting the environment, forest resources and wildlife in the only remaining wildlife corridor between the Puget Sound and the Cascades. It also provides vital recreational opportunities for Northwest Washington.</p> <p>I am also extremely concerned that this agreement be funded to help protect the Lake Samish Watershed as well. The watershed is being threatened by increased development and is an important drinking water source and a source of water for endangered salmon in the Samish River. The agreement includes provision to help protect the commercial timberland included in this watershed.</p> <p>The agreement is predicated on the legislature providing money to help fund the settlement. I appreciate any efforts that can be made on your behalf to procure at least \$7 million dollars to make this agreement work.</p> <p>Thank you for your support on this issue. We have all appreciated your efforts to help this</p>

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			process along.
EM-31	John V. Woolley	Olympic Forest Coalition – vice chair, Sequim Resident	<p>I have been reading a good deal on this “common ground” plan. There are many that feel left out of the final plan; and ecologically-sound perspectives are quite at odds with each other.</p> <p>Having recently attended a Climate Change Conference in Forks at the UW center, with several DNR representatives, I would recommend another look at the BMS. It would be re-assuring that we are giving due respect to the “inconvenient truth” in our efforts to deal with a rather fast changing natural world.</p>
EM-32	Jim Scarborough	Bainbridge Island resident	<p>Hello. I feel strongly that the BSG recommendations as currently written are wholly inadequate. The much-debated "core" area is far too small and should be expanded. A protected minimum of ~2,000 acres would seem a reasonable start, with a wider connection to the adjacent state park. This core should additionally have no thinning whatsoever occurring within its boundaries, which serves only to homogenize and simplify the forest structure in stands greater than 50 years of age. Moreover, rather than jeopardizing returns to the trust, the state legislature should be lobbied for funding to transfer the larger core area into a Natural Resources Conservation Area, which is the only legitimate option for protection (short of a transfer to state parks and recreation).</p>
EM-33	John Day	Sedro-Woolley Resident	<p>I support the Blanchard Strategies Agreement. I recently moved to the Sedro-Woolley area after living in the Marblemount/Rockport area for 25 years. I’m glad not to be spending so many hours each week commuting to my down-valley job, but as I’m an avid back-country hiker, skier and naturalist, it’s hard getting used to not having the vast contiguous area of the Noisy-Diobsud Wilderness Area, Mt. Baker Wilderness Area and North Cascades National Park literally right in my backyard. Having Blanchard Mountain nearby goes a long way towards making up for that loss and makes me appreciate all the more how important it has become for so many people in the burgeoning I-5 corridor as a place to escape from all the ugliness and noise. Needless to say, I was appalled to learn of the DNR’s plans to build new roads and</p>

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			<p>harvest so much of the mountain.</p> <p>While I'd like to see more than the recommended 1600 acre core protected, I am pleased that the Agreement would protect most of the old forest and the best of the trails. I sincerely hope, however, that the Public Lands Commissioner will build enough flexibility into the plan to allow increasing the size of the core area if future conditions warrant it (and, given the growth we're seeing, I'm sure they will). For now, the work of the Blanchard Strategies Group represents a well-reasoned and sincere compromise among representatives of several widely diverse interest groups. The group deserves our commendation.</p> <p>One of the most important aspects of the Agreement is that its implementation would protect a larger area of working forest from encroaching suburban sprawl and conversion to other uses. It represents a great example of landscape-level planning that integrates logging and other economic uses, recreation, watershed protection, and protection of natural areas for wildlife. I hope that the DNR will continue to adapt its silviculture practices towards a model that puts the health of the forest and all that dwell within it ahead of short-term profits. In the long run, this is the only economically sustainable way to go.</p>
EM-34	Johnny Grames	Self	<p>All sides agreeing across the table on an environmental issue, like Blanchard Mt development, is significant, democratic and healthy progress. Now, the same people should stay together to implement the plan they worked on, until completion (we did this with widely popular salt-water Potter Marsh State Park, within urban Anchorage, AK.) Thank you all.</p>
EM-35	Arielle Stein	Bow resident	<p>I am writing to comment on the Blanchard Forest Strategy group recommendations.</p> <p>I commend the efforts of the Strategy Group to come to agreement on this issue. I support the efforts, and support the plan, BUT with an appeal for even stronger environmental protections. I live at the Base of Blanchard Mountain. I see the steepness of some of the south facing slopes</p>

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			<p>where logging has occurred near the road (the road to the hang-gliding launch), and I can see that soil erodes down them. Blanchard has the uniqueness of providing year-round recreation, and recovering naturally regenerated forests. Logging along the roads and trails, and the building of new roads is unreasonable to justify continuing to fund beneficiaries at such a small percentage of their budgets. I understand the mandate of loyalty to the beneficiaries. While I understand the obligation to fund services, I do not agree with the principle of timber sales in ecologically, culturally sensitive areas to support these needed services. The DNR has the authority to protect land for the public benefit, and that includes for ecological and recreational purposes. Undivided loyalty, as specified in the Skamania case, does not specify a maximizing of income earned. I urge the DNR to maximize environmental benefit to future generations by leaving more than the 1600 acre core, and to consider reconveyance, or purchase of less environmentally sensitive lands. I would also promote leaving forested links to existing Larabee State Parks, and the Puget Sound Shoreline so that there can be connectivity for wildlife and other ecological purposes. Please consider that older forest is going to be more and more valuable into the future, and that our anticipated budgets for schools and services will increase. Losing forest to fund these will not be our most economically efficient solution. (I have studied this as a graduate student in environmental studies, so I have a background in this). People are realizing that we have the responsibility to pay for our social services through other means, such as taxes. Thank you very much.</p>
EM-36	Kevin Bowman, MD	Bellingham (Lake Samish) resident	<p>I am writing to express my concern about the future of Blanchard Mountain and to request your support for the Blanchard Strategies Group agreement.</p> <p>I am a lifetime resident of Whatcom county and I have watched with dismay as logging and development have encroached on so many of the natural treasures that I grew up with. With the fate of Blanchard Mountain now hanging in the balance, I feel compelled to speak up and request your assistance in preserving one of the few remaining unique ecosystems in our area.</p>

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			<p>As a Lake Samish resident I am keenly aware of the unique qualities and recreational value of this area. While I would prefer to see the entire area protected, I believe that the preservation of a minimum 1600 acre core per the Blanchard Strategies agreement represents the best strategy to balance the logging and recreational interests of this area.</p> <p>Thank you for your consideration of this important matter.</p>
EM-37	Ted Matts	Self	<p>I am writing to show my support of support the Blanchard Strategies Agreement, as it is the best possible plan I have seen considering all of the threats to the southern Chuckanut Mountains and northern Skagit County wild spaces. I hope the consensus recommendations found in the agreement will be adopted through some formal legal mechanism, such as a lease agreement or MOU that is expected to be permanent and enforceable.</p> <p>The area around Blanchard Mountain is a very special place for the region that is heavily used by tens of thousands of western Washington citizens and tourists each year for recreational uses, helping bring a much needed influx of outside money into the local rural community's surrounding Blanchard Mountain. The only forested connection of note between the Cascades and the Chuckanut Mountains and Puget Sound, the area offers an important wildlife corridor. The way Blanchard Mountain connects to the Ocean, it is the only part of the Chuckanut's not cut off by clear cuts over the last 50 years or so. In fact a 2005 report called Forests on the Edge, published by the US Department of Agriculture, indicates the Chuckanuts as being among the very highest sites at risk in the entire American West. As a former landowner at the foot of Blanchard Mountain, I can tell you the pressure for development in the area is growing rapidly as the forest coverage is greatly shrinking.</p> <p>I support the Blanchard Strategies Group's recommendations to protect a 1,600 acre core that includes most of the old forest on Blanchard Mountain, a majority of the trail systems, the lakes and cliffs on the mountain's top, and a linkage to Larrabee State Park. This plan also considers</p>

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			<p>keeping habitat in place over the next century through important habitat protections for rare plants and animals, streamside forests, and slopes highly visible from Chuckanut Drive and other viewpoints, as well as managing for older forest conditions, providing an experience similar to an ‘unmanaged forest’ as well as scenic vistas for recreation visitors. Different types of non-motorized trail experiences throughout the mountain also would offer opportunities for all different types of ‘working forest’ interpretive educational experiences.</p> <p>While I find it not the perfect solution, as I wish the proposed preserved area were larger to maintain a higher diversity and accommodate a growing larger array of recreationalists in the years to come. I hope there is flexibility built into a final plan that would make possible a larger core if warranted in the future.</p> <p>The agreement also allows light touch forestry within some parts of the core area to help develop old growth habitat conditions. I would like to see strict provisions and oversight detailed in writing to ensure that this thinning will be conducted to ecological benefit, most likely without roads. I do support some logging in a scientifically managed forest where wildlife comes first and careful silviculture can better improve wildlife habitat. I support a standing advisory group would work with DNR’s forest land managers to offer input on proposed timber harvest designs and other activities on Blanchard trust lands into the future. This will increase much needed more sustainable thought that needs to go into more of WADNR’s working forests.</p> <p>I am also very concerned about sprawl and conversion of forest lands. Grouping land allocations into a large swath of public ownership in the Chuckanuts is an important step to keeping the forests intact, to compensate the trusts, and stop the encroaching development. The Strategies Group’s conceptual proposal blends the continued revenue production for Skagit County services and Burlington-Edison School District, at least until badly overdue long-term</p>

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			<p>sustainable revenue processes are reconsidered and restructured in the Olympia legislature. I believe other areas north of Burlington could also be brought into DNR land to compensate school land trust funds and protect against development sprawl.</p> <p>Please support The Blanchard Strategies Groups already initiated joint efforts to lobby the State Legislature for an appropriation of \$15 million, most of the funds would go towards acquisition of timberlands which the DNR will manage to produce revenue to the trusts, and some towards costs of the value of the timber and management of the core, and to reimburse the local trusts. At least half this amount should be appropriated in the Capital Budget Bill to implement the Blanchard Strategies Group agreement. The Legislature may be receptive to the request, as concern is already high over the loss of working farms and forests to development. Timber ownership in particular has never been more unstable in the state, shifting according to real estate demands, tax code changes, investment firms changing attitudes, as well as other factors. The faces of forestry are hardly recognizable anymore, and cannot be counted on into the future.</p> <p>The objective is to maintain the critical mass of responsible timber production as a bulwark against sprawl by expanding the public land base around Blanchard Mountain and other nearby northern Skagit County areas. This is a step forward with the best possible plan considering all of the threats to this area.</p> <p>It was wise for a group with a wide range of viewpoints and concerns got together for a series of meetings over many months to come up with this historic collaborative agreement in an open and transparent process with fair facilitation. I was impressed with the Blanchard Strategies Group process, bringing together knowledgeable and credible representatives from diverse elements of the community to find ways to represent the larger public interest. The BSG was impressive in its balanced composition and in its open and transparent process and fair facilitation. I hope other contentious areas within the DNR can be adapted for the greatest</p>



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			public good, as the DNR is to strive for by law, through such open and effective processes involving a wide variety of interests. Thank you for your time. This is for the public record.
EM-38	Ken Willis and Linda Speck	Mount Vernon Residents	<p>We are not happy with the concessions to the timber industry in the proposal because we believe that the highest and best long-term use of the Blanchard Forest is as habitat and for recreation. We are also in disagreement with the mandate DNR works under directing it to produce revenue for schools from its lands instead of also being able to manage them for habitat and recreation, depending on what makes most sense, but we realize that this issue is well beyond the scope of this proposal.</p> <p>Given our misgivings expressed above and recognizing political reality , we are supportive of the Blanchard Forest Strategy Group recommendation with the following suggestion: that as much of the mature forest generally west and northwest of Lizard Lake be included in the core. Thank you for the opportunity to comment.</p>
EM-39	Philip Humphries	Self	I attended the February 12 meeting in Burlington to review the proposed management plan for Blanchard. I was very pleased to see that paragliding and hang gliding are included in the recreational uses. I spoke to Doug Sutherland and he assured me that these activities will continue to be allowed.
EM-40	Martha Dearstyne		<p>The value of undeveloped land cannot be measured in dollars. The value of wild lands rise with the passing of time as less and less land is left alone in its natural state for future generations to explore and breathe in. Developers who want to pave and build on such lands have one thing in mind, financial profit, or else they would go elsewhere to do their business. We have a gold mine here... Preserve as much land as possible ... houses can always be built in the future. And houses can be built on flatlands without a view.</p> <p>I value the wild trails that I can walk with my daughter - trails that I don't have to drive an hour</p>

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			or more to get to - in fact I can take the bus or ride my bike to the start of these trails. That is huge! Save more land for public use, not private. Thank you.
EM-41	Matthew and Robyn Eddy		Please support the Blanchard Strategies Agreement. We often hike on Blanchard mountain and think it is one of the prettiest and most accessible hiking areas on the entire West Coast of the US. We have hiked literally thousands of miles, including 2,000 miles on the PCT, and Blanchard Mtn. is very, very special. Thank you.
EM-42	Mark and Cathy McKenzie	Bellingham Residents	<p>Below are our comments regarding the BMSG "compromise." We hope the DNR will work with legislators and citizens to broaden its management of trust lands to prioritize recreational use and ecological integrity and limit logging and working-forest interests to state forest lands which are least recreationally, ecologically, and geologically significant to communities which now rely more on hospitality (tourism) and related retail income rather than less-sustainable, long-term resource-extractive industries. We cannot support this Blanchard agreement because 1) the ecological and recreational public interests were not proportionally represented in terms of adverse economic impacts to this unique regional destination and second-growth forest ecosystem, 2) other long-term, sustainable working-forest management options were not duly deliberated, and 3) different long-term strategies for public school funding have not been seriously explored. We hope you will read the following comments with those reasons in mind:</p> <p>Something's askew on Blanchard Mountain. There's a celebratory tone among our politicians touting this "wonderful compromise" that has allegedly been reached between the disparate interests of the Department of Natural Resources (DNR), Skagit County, the timber industry, and the environmental and recreational communities which extend into Whatcom County.</p>

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			<p>One Whatcom County Council member is quoted (Feb. 7, Cascadia Weekly letter) as saying that this compromise of our public trust lands “represents hope for future collaborative efforts across the board.”</p> <p>Hope for whom? Logging interests? New mill start-ups from out of state? The health and future of local school children?</p> <p>What’s missing at this big collaboration party is any ability to deal with the cumulative adverse impacts such “compromises” have on our ability to achieve a sustainable ecology and economy in this geologically unique region of our Evergreen State -- the Chuckanut Mountains -- where the Cascades meet the sea.</p> <p>No one at this party is questioning whether it is wise or feasible to exhaust a finite land supply in order to continue to allow the DNR to manage our public “trust” investments as if the value of our forests and watersheds is simply in their harvestability rather than the naturally functioning, diverse ecosystems and wildlife/recreation corridors which they are. Logging two-thirds (2,800 acres) of Blanchard Mountain and leaving a small (1,600-acre) isolated crown of “thinned” trees will only fund one-tenth of one percent of the Burlington-Edison School district budget. Yet this “great compromise” agreement will slice essential chunks out of a healthy, functioning second-growth forest ecosystem and drastically reduce its recreational value for the more than 60,000 people who trek here annually to enjoy the unique hiking, hang gliding, wildlife viewing, and other substantial connections to nature which this mountain provides. A few visible “buffers” near the scenic highway won’t fool anyone who understands the underlying nature of what Blanchard Mountain and the Chuckanuts represent in this region and to the health of its people and all life around Puget Sound.</p> <p>The recreation industry benefits and supports more people here than those industries which rely</p>

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			<p>on the extraction, sale, and export of our shared natural resources, yet its “management” is ignored in any long-term planning and economic development strategies. The same can be said of our air and water supplies, which can only sustain us healthfully if we prioritize their protection as direct consumers rather than as industrial users.</p> <p>We would all be better off if we started placing our “trust,” our public investments, and our taxpayer subsidies in industries which do not plunder our forests and mineral resources, destabilize our soils, pollute our air and water supplies, and destroy our most valued remaining evergreen corridors. There’s a wealth of responsible businesses out there just waiting for the opportunity to provide us with more sustainable job opportunities and investment alternatives, if we as a society shift our priorities toward those industries and provide the incentives needed for them to operate here profitably.</p> <p>The time has come for the silent majority to stand up, take off the party hats, and demand our lawmakers stop pretending we can have our cake and eat it too.</p>
EM-43	Bruce Barnbaum	Granite Falls Resident	<p>I have reviewed the plans for the management of Blanchard Mountain near the Chuckanut road, and I feel that the "core area" of just 1600 acres needs to be greatly enlarged. I feel it should include the entire 4800 acres, and that DNR has an obligation to fully explain why it should be any less than that full acreage.</p> <p>This is a region that connects the Puget Sound to the North Cascade Mountains in a unique way. There is no other direct connection like this one, and every means of protecting and preserving it to the greatest degree must be utilized.</p> <p>I feel the entire area should be kept devoid of commercial logging of any type. It should be protected and allowed to return to a natural old-growth forest, making it one of the most remarkable areas not only in the State of Washington and in the US., but in the world.</p> <p>We can exploit the Blanchard Forest, or we can protect it. We cannot do both. As our recognition of the connectivity and importance of intact ecosystems leaps forward, now is the</p>

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			time to put an end to further exploitation of this magnificent and unique ecosystem.
EM-44	Margaret Loudon		Please <b>do not increase</b> the amount of forest being removed from logging above the 1,600 acres already put aside. We need the revenue for our schools and jobs for our loggers.
EM-45	Dale Plant	Bellingham Resident	<p>I really enjoy riding mountain bikes on Blanchard, so it would be a shame to loose such a treasure that so many of us in the area enjoy.</p> <p>I support the Blanchard Strategies Agreement as it is the best possible plan considering all of the threats in the county.</p> <p>I appreciate that the recommended core includes most of the old forest and the best of the trail system. I just wish it were larger and request the Commissioner build flexibility into the plan that would enable a larger core if warranted in the future.</p> <p>I'm very concerned about sprawl and conversion of forest land, and so are supportive of the Blanchard Strategies Group recommendations because expanded public ownership is the right solution for the future of the Chuckanuts.</p>
EM-46	Forest Cat	Bellingham Resident	<p>I support the general outline of the zoning agreement negotiated by the Blanchard Forest Strategies Group, as presented at the open house on February 12. The stakeholder group consensus process is a model that produces a top quality management direction to the benefit of all Washingtonians; I commend you for assembling this group, and I hope that you will apply this method to other state lands.</p> <p>Although I would prefer that a greater area be designated for conservation, I realize that Blanchard Mountain is a multiple use area, and that if we are going to move forward to the development of a workable detailed management plan, then we all have to make some significant concessions. I feel that this agreement is a reasonable compromise between resource</p>

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			<p>extraction, conservation, scenic preservation, and non-motorized recreation, as well as the economics and other values of each of those uses. I request that you keep open the option of increasing the core conservation area in the future should increased recreation use, wildlife management needs, and/or forest science indicate that such additional conservation would be in the best public interest.</p> <p>I also strongly support the public acquisition of now-privately-owned peripheral forest lands for a variety of public uses, including timber base. That goal is very important also to maintain traditional access routes, habitat linkages, and water quality. Intensively managed timberlands are preferable to residential sprawl.</p> <p>I would also like to see some improvement to this outline in the form of the preservation of several additional wider recreation connection and habitat conservation corridors between Blanchard Mountain and South Chuckanut Mtn. / Larrabee State Park.</p> <p>I have used Blanchard Mountain for nearly 30 years for hiking, observing wildlife, and enjoying the scenic vistas. It is especially important to me that forest management be sensitive to the needs of wildlife and endemic plant species. I am very concerned about the impact of even-aged timber management and new roads and how those actions can adversely impact the concentration of eagles and owls in the area. <u>I would like to see the steepest westside slopes with the oldest trees and greatest concentration of snags remain permanently off –limits to timber generation.</u> I would also like to see commercial forest management primarily directed toward the enhancement of wildlife habitat through careful thinning of the younger and middle-aged stands.</p>
EM-47	Thomas P. Hammond	Seattle Resident	<p>Thank you for the opportunity to comment.</p> <p>It is my belief that the Blanchard Strategies Group's agreement does not go far enough in protecting the ecological values of Blanchard Mountain. The proposed 1,600-acre core area</p>

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			needs to be much larger, at least 2,400 acres. Indeed, it should encompass the entire 4,800 acres that is being discussed. As this is the one real place that the Cascades actually touch tidewater, it is unique in the entire Puget Sound region, and should be treated with the respect and land management (read: conservation) that is so important to us native Northwesterners. Thanks for your time and attention.
EM-48	John S. Edwards		I wish to submit a comment as a long-time resident of Washington State with a serious concern for the preservation of critical remaining fragments of ecosystems. I believe that the Blanchard Strategies Group agreement does not adequately protect sufficient acreage. The area is unique in connecting the Cascades to the Pacific.
EM-49	Sean Kirk	Bellingham Resident	<p>The DNR is to be commended for agreeing to pull together the Blanchard Forest Strategies Group. At one level, it is heartening to see that widely diverse interests could come to an agreement about the future of Blanchard Mountain. On the other hand, it is very troubling to read the public comments from 2004 about Blanchard Mountain found on the DNR site (the link to this document has been removed from the site in recent weeks, by the way. Why would that be, do you suppose?). I agree with the vast majority of those who shared their views three years ago. Namely that it is well past time for the State of Washington to still be relying on timber sales to help fund public schools. Viewing state-owned trees as bank accounts for rural areas may have made some sense in 1907—however shortsighted and selfish. But to continue this practice in 2007 is beyond abysmal.</p> <p>So I object to the premise behind the Blanchard Forest Plan—that Blanchard Mountain is to be regarded as an urban “working forest.” All recommendations made in the plan flow from this starting point. The Strategies group itself, rather than a diverse group, was heavily weighted to timber industry interests and to Skagit County, who stands to gain directly from Blanchard timber harvests. I agree with many of those who spoke out three years ago who believe that Blanchard deserves special recognition and preservation—in its entirety.</p>

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			I also realize that the state constitution makes revenue generation a top priority for DNR lands, and that Blanchard in particular holds special revenue implications for Skagit County. What I urge the DNR to do is to spare Blanchard Mountain from all cutting and then work with the people of Washington State to once and for all eliminate the destructive and still shortsighted legal requirement that forces counties to choose between trees and rural schools.
EM-50	Rich & Feryll Blanc		<p>I attended the open house held at Burlington Edison High School earlier this month, spoke with strategy group members, and read the buff colored flyer handed out to attendees "Blanchard Forest".</p> <p>My husband and I are 36 year residents of Skagit County, likewise having that many years hiking and visiting Blanchard Mountain and the Chuckanut Range we share the following comments regarding the strategy group and its conclusions:</p> <p>THE STRATEGY PLAN IS UNACCEPTABLE.....Blanchard Mountain's highest value to the community and public at large (it is public land!) is in its natural state as is....for mankind's enjoyment, health, education and recreation for today and tomorrow's generations NOT AS FINISHED LUMBER. Tens of thousands of people from inside and out of Skagit County yearly use Blanchard Mountain for the above reasons and activities. Blanchard Mountain is not just any old hill. It warrants being protected in its natural state as an in-tact haven of forestland and biodiversity, supporting a variety of wildlife and plant communities, AND securing the health and integrity of its marine shoreline and near shore marine sealife and Samish Bayl</p> <p>The composition of the strategy group members and the interests they represented were heavily weighed to support timber harvesting.....Unfair bias prevented addressing or creating other solutions for Blanchard Mountain to remain as is....for one it does not NEED to be logged as public trust land.... i.e. reconveyance was not presented, nor the possibility of co-joining it</p>



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			<p>with Larrabee State Park making an outstanding public use area that would long bring notoriety and economic benefits to our county in coming years. The composition of the strategy group lacked environmental, wildlife, fisheries, public health, and recreational interest representatives. If this was to be a fair group representing the public's interests it was shortchanged and impossible considering the interests represented.</p> <p>The strategy plan is nothing more than an obvious, transport roadmap to harvest Blanchard Mountain.....please note it is called Blanchard Mountain not Blanchard Forest....this reasons for this new nomenclature is transparent too.</p>
EM-51	Tracy Spring		<p>Please PLEASE prioritize preservation of as much Chuckanut acreage as possible for non-motorized recreation and habitat. Once it's gone, it's gone.</p> <p>I have enjoyed hiking in the Chuckanuts since 1975 and hope to enjoy hiking the Chuckanuts with my great-grandkids.</p> <p>Urban growth is inevitable...please preserve this unique area. It's important to human and non-human quality of life.</p> <p>Years down the road, we'll be SO glad we did.</p>
EM-52	David Fluharty	Seattle Resident	<p>For the last sixty years I have enjoyed the area around Chuckanut Drive and even the I-5 corridor that bounds the Blanchard Forest. Only recently have I learned of efforts to find ways to maintain and restore its ecological integrity. Based on my review of the proposed agreement negotiated, I feel like the approach is too timid and needs to be expanded. I would argue as well that there should not be issues attached to this decision process that are outside of the Blanchard Forest proper, e.g., agreements about how US National Forest Lands are to be managed.</p>

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			<p>I object to the idea that DNR would negotiate with a selected and limited group of stakeholders rather than with the citizens of Washington. Therefore, I write as a citizen to encourage DNR to take a much broader look at Blanchard Forest in light of the whole forest ecosystem of northwestern Washington. Think of the opportunities to connect Puget Sound with the crest of the Cascades. There is no better place than this area to restore and maintain that corridor.</p> <p>I can extent these comments to multiple pages but I restrain myself. If you would care to have further information, please let me know.</p> <p>DNR is doing some terrific work with Trust Land Transfers in the North Cascades. Please let the future of Blanchard Forest be part of that forward-looking thinking.</p>
EM-53	John McLaughlin		<p>Thank you for providing an opportunity to comment on the Blanchard Strategies Agreement.</p> <p>First, I want to praise several elements of the agreement and the process used to reach it.</p> <p>(1) I appreciate the interest DNR has expressed in the ideas and values of affected citizens, and the effort to address those ideas and values in an agreement for Blanchard.</p> <p>(2) I strongly endorse the plan to expand public (DNR) ownership of land in the Lake Samish basin. Such an expansion will play an important role in maintaining ecological integrity of the region, in protecting water quality in Lake Samish and associated streams, and in reducing impacts of Blanchard forest protection on timber volumes and associated economic values. As described below, a larger expansion is warranted.</p> <p>(3) I am pleased to see that ecological thinning for forest restoration is included in the agreement, although I have some concerns about how such thinning might be conducted under the agreement. (see below)</p>

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			<p>Second, several elements of the agreement appear inadequate.</p> <p>(1) There appears to be little scientific basis for the proposal, including: area allocations to protected vs. harvested designations, spatial configuration of those designations, corridor widths, locations, and alignments, conservation of sensitive species and habitats, or regional impacts. Given the potentially high ecological value of the area at both local and regional scales, a credible plan would require reference to a comprehensive environmental assessment and include provisions to protect important environmental elements identified in such an assessment.</p> <p>(2) The 1,600 acre recreational core size is much too small. Protecting just one third of an area with such important recreational and ecological values would not be adequate.</p> <p>(3) The recreational core is poorly configured relative to recreational and ecological resources. Many important trails, recreational sites, and habitats lie outside the proposed core. These would be irreparably damaged by timber harvesting.</p> <p>(4) The proposed corridors are inadequate and poorly justified. The corridors would not meet the needs of most wildlife, nor many recreational uses -- such as connection to Larrabee State Park. A credible corridor configuration must identify the species of interest, the needs of those species, and how the configuration meets those needs. The corridor element of the agreement lacks these characteristics.</p> <p>(5) Construction of new roads should be proscribed without exception for any ecological thinning. The risks of ecological degradation associated with roads would outweigh potential</p>

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			<p>benefits derived from ecological thinning. Similar risks applied to ecological thinning in the Northwest Forest Plan, which led the Ecological Society of America and the American Institute for Biological Sciences to doubt the restoration value of such thinning. Parts of Blanchard Mountain would benefit from ecological thinning, but such thinning should be done without building new roads.</p> <p>(6) The short time frame for harvesting stands to the south and east appears ill-advised, particularly given inadequate surveys of ecological resources in the area. Slowing the harvest schedule also would provide more time for protectionist advocates to meet challenges to provide compensating funds.</p> <p>(7) Composition of the Blanchard Forest Advisory Committee should be determined by a more inclusive group of stakeholders. Without more inclusive representation, implementation of the agreement likely will be suspect and will not be credible to underrepresented parties.</p> <p>Thank you for considering my comments and for your interest in appropriate stewardship of state lands. I look forward to reading your responses to comments from all parties and to reviewing subsequent versions of the management plan for Blanchard.</p>
EM-54	Ken Wilcox Ann Eissinger	Chuckanut Conservancy	<p>The Chuckanut Conservancy is a pending 501(c)(3) non-profit organization dedicated to the long-term protection of ecological, recreational, scenic, and sustainable economic values in the Chuckanuts-to-Cascades region of Northwest Washington. Critical to our mission is the future ecological integrity of Blanchard Mountain, which as you know, is at the heart of one of the most unique coastal forested landscapes in the entire Puget Sound region. Thus we appreciate the opportunity to comment on the recent Blanchard Forest Management Strategy as presented by the Blanchard Strategies Group (BSG) and Washington Department of Natural Resources (DNR).</p>

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			<p>After fifteen years of effort by DNR and other agencies, various non-governmental organizations and citizen groups on the Blanchard Mountain issue, we are disappointed at the major shortcomings evident in the plan and Strategy as presented. Based on our review, the overall Strategy essentially offers a forest management plan with well defined timber harvest goals and road construction plan, utilizing designated zones of various harvest methods, yet with poorly defined public access and use, and minimal protected habitat, which seems mostly designed to conform with the requirements of the Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP). The Blanchard Forest Management Strategy lacks biological and ecological consideration, regional sensitivity, public use objectives, protection of internal viewsapes, non-forestry economic considerations, and binding conservation goals.</p> <p>Furthermore, the Strategy, as well as comments by DNR, suggest that near-term logging activities outside the core would be focused on areas of greatest interest to conservationists, rather than areas where forestry has not been as vigorously challenged, including roughly 2,400 acres of the DNR's total managed area of 4,800 acres. We believe that the DNR can demonstrate good faith by focusing near-term logging on areas that are not under major contention. This will ensure that citizens retain the opportunity to protect these lands in the future (before they are logged) by building on the strong public support for conservation that already exists and by helping to develop the financial wherewithal to protect new areas adjacent to the core. Initiating the Blanchard Forest Strategies roundtable was a tremendous opportunity to have a focused discussion about Blanchard Mountain and its future. Unfortunately, the Strategies Group was comprised of hand-picked special-interest representatives and allowed for little public participation and few presenters outside the DNR staff. The selected group did not include representatives from the community at-large or neighborhood groups adjacent to the mountain who are directly affected by the management of Blanchard Mountain. It also excluded individuals with the greatest institutional memory and experience outside the DNR to bring a considerable wealth of cumulative knowledge in planning, conservation and science to the table.</p>

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			<p>Most notable was the absence of a planning professional and expert biologist or ecologist to represent the important biodiversity and complex ecology of this coastal forest ecosystem.</p> <p>The lack of serious consideration of non-forestry economic values is also troubling. General references to a weak economic assessment from 2002 does not satisfy the need to address the direct and indirect economic benefits of recreation, tourism, ecological services, and increased land values and local tax revenues that could be realized if Blanchard Mountain were established as a regional park or wildlife reserve, for example. The scope of the 2002 economic study was extremely narrow and incomplete in terms of these non-forestry benefits and failed to acknowledge real and significant benefits to local economies and county tax coffers of not logging Blanchard Mountain. Many employers offering good-paying jobs have located in this region as a direct result of the quality of life here, including the opportunity to enjoy a place like Blanchard Mountain unimpaired by the impacts of logging. That kind of direct economic benefit was not even remotely considered in the 2002 study. Based on first-hand professional planning experience and the extensive literature that is available on the subject, we suspect that those benefits may be much greater than the revenues derived from logging, or at least far greater than what was presented in the 2002 study.</p> <p>Several plans and documents identify the value of Blanchard Mountain's biodiversity. These include DNR's own documents and studies, as well as the Whatcom and Skagit Land Trusts, Nature Conservancy, Wildlife Conservation Trust, and others. Yet, full biological disclosure was not made in the strategy process. Although a copy of the 1999 Blanchard Mountain Assessment was included in the group's binder, it seemed that few of the participants actually understood its purpose and limitations. Only approximately one hour out of eight or more full-day sessions was allowed for an introduction to the biology of Blanchard Mountain with an emphasis on the regulatory responsibility and guidelines of the HCP. As a result, the biodiversity and ecology of Blanchard Mountain is not represented in the Strategy.</p>

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			<p>Blanchard Mountain is the largest remaining stand of mature native coastal forest remaining on the Puget Sound's mainland. It rises from Samish Bay to 2,000 feet creating elevational zones harboring a diversity of plants, wildlife and habitats unmatched in the region. The mountain's topography, coupled with its complexity of old forest, lakes, streams, valleys, cliffs and caves result in microclimates providing specific conditions for rare vegetation and wildlife, including old-growth forest, balds, large beaver complexes, the only remaining coastal nesting area for the threatened Marbled Murrelet and one of few sites of Townsend's big-eared bat in Puget Sound. These are critical indicators of a greater biological richness and habitat sensitivity that extend far beyond the HCP requirements and prescriptions. The HCP only addresses those species and habitats associated with or identified under the Endangered Species Act. The Blanchard Forest Management Plan does not address or provide protection for the whole biological community or biodiversity of the Blanchard Mountain.</p> <p>Biodiversity, ecological function and irreplaceable habitat have greater value than simple commodity. They represents the system that supports all life. It also has to be measured in terms of scarcity and priority. As agencies and organizations prepare to spend hundreds of millions of public dollars to restore the ecological function of Puget Sound, with tens of millions dedicated to create new coastal parks and habitat protection, we have an opportunity and obligation to participate in this process. The mature coastal forest of Blanchard Mountain is invaluable and represents an irreplaceable opportunity for the public to easily access a native relic old-growth forest in less than fifty years from now. In addition to recreational and education opportunities on Blanchard, the ecological wealth has yet to be fully measured and protected. Therefore, a contiguous biological reserve, based on biological importance and ecological functions, needs to be designated on Blanchard Mountain in addition to the recreational core area. Considering these overlying values, the present "Core Zone" of 1,600 acres is inadequate.</p>

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			<p>The definition, intended management, and language describing the “Core Zone” also seems misleading. The core area or “Core Zone” occupies an area identified for its recreational and habitat value. The plan calls for this zone to be “managed in a manner similar to a permanently protected “Natural Resource Conservation Area” (NRCA) and then goes on to describe under Management Directions, thinning and other “ecological management” techniques to hasten the development of late-successional forest. Management without roads is followed by an allowance for roads. This is all very confusing and devalues the plan overall as apparent double-speak.</p> <p>The future management of the core should not be left to an ad-hoc committee designed to address various political problems associated with the management of Blanchard Mountain. The core certainly deserves the protected status of an NRCA, a proven tool for effective conservation on DNR-managed lands, yet it appears it’s management and protection are largely undefined. Yet if the area is to be managed like an NRCA, then a qualified entity whose primary interest is permanent protection of the ecosystem needs to be responsible for its management, not a political body that is heavily influenced by timber interests.</p> <p>Planning for multiple uses on Blanchard Mountain is only as effective as the baseline information available. While time was spent mapping visual corridors with great care and detail, the other uses and values were poorly represented in the end product. There is no baseline mapping for biological attributes. It is not clear how the core area was determined or how the planning process was guided. Core also denotes isolation, not connectivity. It is very important, and not addressed in this plan, that areas of biological and ecological value be interconnected. The larger wildland cores represented by Blanchard and Larrabee State Park require a much more substantial connecting corridor than the virtually nonexistent link provided for in the agreement Broad ecological connections north and south, and along natural corridors such as stream systems are also essential, but lacking in any detail.</p>



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			<p>It is also important that certain sensitive habitat areas not be harvested, thinned or accessed by roads or even recreationalists. A substantial new road system to support forest access and harvest, even within the core, appears to be a priority in the plan. Impacts caused by roads, disturbance, drainage issues, road location and maintenance are all issues that are not addressed. Environmental and ecological impacts caused by roads can be extreme and unnecessary. The proposed road system did not appear on the map and needs to be fully disclosed to the public for review and discussion.</p> <p>Again, the Blanchard Forest Plan represents a forest-harvest-centric plan. The proposed 2% annual harvest equals nearly 100 acres per year or a 50 year rotation as if the full 4,827 acres is to be harvested. This is an aggressive plan that does not appear to be sustainable given the current land base and the rhetoric about eco-based logging. Either it assumes additional lands will be purchased and ready for harvest in the time needed, or the intention is to maintain a rotational harvest on an on-going basis including the core area with only the regulated set-asides left out of the harvest area. Is such an aggressive extraction goal necessary? It is also unclear what this harvest goal is based on, what is driving it, or what previous harvest levels were attained for comparison. It is necessary to balance the harvest value with the benefit of leaving the forest intact without harvest and identify alternative revenue sources. Alternatives, however, are not identified. For the general public to make informed comment or decision, full disclosure of revenue information is necessary. Again, this is confusing and conflicts with the proposed “core zone” protection area in the plan.</p> <p>The purchase of private forest lands around Blanchard Mountain makes sense and will help maintain the area’s forest base and offer additional recreational options if appropriate. However, these lands also contain important conservation opportunities, particularly to the west where an intricate network of streams, wetlands and beaver ponds from Pine Lake to Mud Lake, Lost</p>

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			<p>Lake and Oyster Creek should be well connected with the emerging Larrabee-Blanchard protected area which is of utmost importance to the Chuckanut Conservancy. While our main interest is obviously conservation, we believe that working forests can coexist with an ambitious regional conservation initiative and provide that critical hedge against urban sprawl, but only if we are careful in protecting the lands of highest ecological and recreational value. It would be practical to obtain options on the target lands quickly prior to values increasing out of reach. Partnering with Land Trusts and the future park district would also be beneficial to secure conservation easements and recreational maintenance support where needed.</p> <p>The BSG strategy also seems to ignore the prospect of creative solutions such as a new Chuckanut Mountains Park District which, among other things, is intended to serve as a significant financial partner in furthering conservation and recreation opportunities at Blanchard Mountain and elsewhere. The petition process for creation of the district is well underway and is expected to be voted on this fall.</p> <p>The Blanchard Forest Plan lacks any reference to alternatives and public process beyond the Advisory Committee. Prior to implementation of this plan there needs to be revisions based on the comments received and a public forum for all citizens to express their perspective. It is also suggested that a full biological baseline inventory and mapping be completed prior to any further action toward timber cutting or road building. For the Advisory Committee, inclusion of community or neighborhood representative(s) are recommended as is a non-affiliated professional biologist/ecologist. Representatives from the future park district as well as other conservation organizations, such as the Chuckanut Conservancy, who are dedicated to the long-term protection of this unique place should also be at the table. It is clear that there is a broad public constituency that believes protecting all or most of Blanchard Mountain is of tremendous importance, and there is deep concern that that voice is not being heard.</p>

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			<p>In summary, the Blanchard Forest Plan is confusing, biased strongly in favor of timber resource benefits, is misleading, and lacks scientific merit. The opportunity to create a sensible multi-use strategy for Blanchard Mountain seems undermined by a new aggressive harvest schedule and desire to meet the demands of only a segment of the public it is meant to serve. For fifteen years the citizens of this region have articulated their desire to protect 2,400 to 3,000 acres or more of Blanchard Mountain's public land for recreation and conservation, yet their efforts and the strong basis for protection of this unique place that has been articulated many times over continue to be dismissed by the status quo.</p> <p>Given the growing regional population, quality of life issues critical to attracting strong businesses and good jobs to our region, ever-increasing demand for high-value recreational areas, and a dwindling coastal forest habitat area on which certain species are dependant, Blanchard Mountain must be seriously considered for its regional significance in all these areas, as well as for its biological value in the restoration of the Puget Sound. The Blanchard Forest Plan needs to be in alignment with other regional planning and restoration efforts, with goals and objectives stated clearly and offered equally for the whole public to understand and embrace. In addition, the old forest of Blanchard, if left to mature naturally, will provide future generations with the unparalleled experience of walking in a vibrant old-growth coastal forest. For the restoration of Puget Sound, Blanchard Mountain represents the best opportunity to protect a relic forest, a functional piece necessary to the whole for all citizens to enjoy. Thank you for your interest and willingness to consider Blanchard Mountain in your planning efforts.</p>
EM-55	Tom Pratum	Conservation Chiar, North Cascades Audubon Society	<p>Blanchard Mountain is a very important recreation and birding area for many of our chapters' members in Whatcom and Skagit County. In the past we have supported efforts to preserve the area for wildlife and users alike. With that in mind we offer the following comments and recommendations on the Blanchard Strategies Group (BSG) agreement:</p> <p>- The core area – in which some management activities will be allowed – is also far</p>

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			<p>smaller, and more fragmented than in those proposals we have previously supported (e.g. <i>Blanchard Mountain Proposal</i>, <i>Sierra Club</i>, <i>Mt Baker Group</i>, <i>December 1998</i>).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>o We specifically note that the NW part of the designated core area (in SW section 360304 in township-range-section notation) presents an extremely narrow bridge connecting an area of preserved habitat with old growth characteristics to the main part of the core area. We feel that this narrow strip is insufficient, and leads to fragmentation of the core habitat.</li> <li>o Much of the area between the Samish Bay Connection trail and Max's Shortcut trail is slated for intensive management activities (approximately in the area of the intersection of sections 360309, 360310, 360315 and 360316). New roads are proposed for this area, and we feel this would be an unfortunate result of this agreement as this area is quite close to an occupied Marbled Murrelet stand (see comment below), and has been slated for preservation in previous proposals.</li> <li>o The entire SE corner of section 360316 should be preserved to protect the only occupied salt water Marbeled Murrelet habitat in Puget Sound. If an agreement is adopted, we recommend that the DNR perform no timber management activities in the core area, and refrain from all such activities on the three non-core areas mentioned above for the 5 year lifetime of this current agreement. It is quite possible that during that time period further negotiations, and new funding sources, will lead to these areas being taken out of timber production.</li> </ul> <p>We hope that this agreement will not be adopted in haste without some modification. If it is, it is quite possible that it will fall well short of its goal of alleviating the conflict over this important area. Thank you for your consideration.</p>
EM-56	Marc Beardsley	North Cascades Conservation Council	<p>On behalf of the North Cascades Conservation Council, I want to thank you for the opportunity to comment on the agreement of the Blanchard Strategies Group. The North Cascades Conservation Council, founded by citizens in 1957, helped establish the North Cascades National Park and a number of wilderness areas in the region over the last half century.</p>

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			<p>We have also been very active on a range of park and forest issues for many years and we are particularly concerned about the future of Blanchard Mountain.</p> <p>We view this area as an extremely important part of the unique corridor of foothills extending from the high peaks of the North Cascades all the way to the marine shore. It is extraordinary that we have the opportunity at Blanchard Mountain to conserve for now and for future generations an exceptional "urban wilderness" unmatched anywhere else in the Puget Sound region. We also see this area as very similar to the Issaquah Alps, except that it is next to the sea, which makes it incredibly special to so many people.</p> <p>Harvey Manning, one of our longest serving board members (over forty years) prior to his death last fall, wrote of the good work that was done to help create our system of Natural Resource Conservation Areas on DNR-managed lands. He explained in some detail how this came about and invited readers to "dream a bit" about other areas that might be so deserving. As you may know, Harvey was instrumental in creating the NRCA at West Tiger Mountain as part of a larger complex of park and habitat reserves that assure a continuing legacy of wildland recreation--as well as a refuge from the growth and development sweeping across the region.</p> <p>It has been recently reported that Skagit County has become one of the fastest growing areas of the state. Bellingham is also nearby and we have many friends and members in both counties who consider the protection of Blanchard Mountain to be a very high priority. Given the outstanding values that Blanchard represents and the dire need to protect additional state-managed lands on the mainland of Skagit County, we feel that Blanchard Mountain is an ideal candidate for full protection as an NRCA or possibly even a state park.</p> <p>Harvey referred to Blanchard as Elephant Mountain and was very supportive for many years of its full protection. We ask that you "dream a bit" and think of the legacy you can help leave to</p>

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			<p>future generations by setting aside what many of us believe is the last best place on the entire coast of Puget Sound.</p> <p>If the mountain as a whole cannot be protected immediately, citizens should not be denied the opportunity to work for greater protection over the coming years. It is our understanding that DNR intends to begin logging areas that are most in contention first, rather than focus its efforts on areas that many conservationists have been willing to let go of in the spirit of compromise. It makes little sense to us why the DNR would want to build new roads and commence logging in the areas we are all most concerned about. Thus we strongly request that all timber harvest activity be delayed for at least five years anywhere within the preferred core areas as proposed under the Sierra Club's previous petition for an NRCA transfer and for which an assessment was completed.</p> <p>We also believe it is inappropriate for the agreement to address or implicate forest policy on federal lands. This is an issue we are particularly involved in and we are very concerned about the kind of precedent that might be set by allowing local entities to dictate to federal officials what may or may not be appropriate management policy on lands that belong to all Americans.</p> <p>We believe that the ecological and economic value of protecting Blanchard Mountain far exceeds any timber revenue that can be generated.</p> <p>This is a very special place of statewide significance that deserves much more than what the BSG process was able to provide. Thank you.</p>
EM-57 (See CC-19)			
EM-58	Anne Braaten	Sedro-	To the Department of Natural Resources:

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		Woolley resident	<p>Having read through the Policy for Sustainable Forests (Policy), then spent a cold, wet, wonderful few hours hiking on Blanchard Mountain, it's time to distill the many comments/ concerns that spring to mind. Some, I've come to realize, primarily relate to the overall role DNR plays and how this could/ should be modified as we lurch into the 21<sup>st</sup> century. I'll try to stick to comments specific to Blanchard Mountain.</p> <p>When one gets to know a place over 15 years of visits, it's difficult to encapsulate observations and experiences in words. I see it through the eyes of a professional biologist, therefore also through eyes of wonder; and experience it in wonder and in gratitude to have someplace so close into which to vanish for at least several hours a week. So the abridged version:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Blanchard Mountain is important as a little island of remarkable ecological diversity amidst a highly altered landscape (view it on Google Earth -- it is a lonely dark green patch north of the Skagit Delta); and as a refuge in which to escape most weekends, to be immersed into the mountain's bit of wildness. It's where I've watched banana slugs and pileated woodpeckers, had the privilege of seeing one of my favorite reptiles (alligator lizard); and met folks from many walks of life: every 'color of (working) collar', every age.</li> <li>❖ Its conservation would provide a <u>legacy</u> for future generations not "just" of timber and related jobs, but of a protected pocket of ecological health and of a place for this area's growing human population to learn about and value a healthy, self-regenerated forest in their (proverbial) backyard.</li> </ul> <p>As such I would like to see those 2,600 summit acres left alone. But as things are more complex than that....</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Based on what I have read in the Policy, it appears the Blanchard Strategies Agreement is</li> </ul>

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			<p>the best possible plan, at least at this point in time. It is <b>VASTLY</b> better than the alternative of logging the whole of the mountain -- not “just” in setting aside a core area, but also in its consideration of threats to undeveloped areas beyond DNR’s current boundaries.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>★ The Agreement is truly in the spirit of managing the public lands for the benefit of all of the public for now and into the future.</li> <li>★ Given the Policy’s expressed flexibility for providing some areas of harvest deferral it’s too bad it had to take so much angst (as implied by Mr. Sutherland) to hammer out this creative strategy.</li> <li>★ I am grateful to the Blanchard Forest Strategies Group for sticking with it and finding common ground where it could be found, and to the DNR for initiating this process.</li> </ul> <p>❖ Please do accept setting aside the core area as a means not only of protecting an important recreational area, but even more so as long-term conservation of rich and diverse plant and wildlife habitat in an area where most has been converted into single-species, single-aged stands.</p> <p>❖ As much as the mountain is important to me as a place of recreation it is much more important as wildlife habitat and as relatively undeveloped land. I applaud the Blanchard Strategies Agreement’s recommendation of expanded public ownership of timberlands. It is a way to protect part of the maturing forest on the mountain while also preventing the southward creep of Bellingham; and a way to compensate the trusts for forests held in long-term deferral on the mountain.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>★ Much though I blanch at clear-cuts, even worse is unchecked urban sprawl. I live in a very densely developed neighborhood out of concern that the 20 acres I would otherwise like to have would constitute yet another encroachment into undeveloped areas.</li> <li>★ I will urge my legislators to appropriate the funds needed to implement the Blanchard</li> </ul>



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			<p>Strategies Agreement, and/or something that allows protection of additional acreage on the mountain (see next bullet).</p> <p>❖ Again given the Policy's expressed allowances for providing some areas of harvest deferral, I urge the Commissioner to allow <u>flexibility</u> with regards to the management of the mountain's forests over the long term, <u>which would enable a larger core in future</u> -- just as the plan leaves open the option for increased "harvest". The values at stake are too important for a plan to preclude change over time: perhaps it will become possible to set aside a larger area <u>while also</u> maintaining a forest base sufficient to meet the state's obligations to the trusts. I understand, for example, that some private timberlands in the Chuckanuts may become available for purchase over time.</p> <p>★ I will also urge my legislators to keep open avenues (such as by increasing the public land base where appropriate) for the protection of industrial forest, control of sprawl, <u>and the long-term protection</u> of areas such as Blanchard for their <u>ecological</u> and <u>recreational values</u>.</p> <p>I hope the Strategy Group process is one that will continue to be used not only for Blanchard Mountain (and I support an advisory group made up of the mountain's stakeholders) but for other areas of similarly diverse values and pressures.</p> <p>Thank you for allowing me the opportunity to add my voice to this process. Please keep me on your mailing lists for any further opportunities there are for public involvement.</p>
EM-59	Ryan Zebold	Bow resident	<p>I am writing in regards to the recent Blanchard Forest Strategies Group recommendations. My family and I live next to Blanchard Mountain and my children attend Edison Elementary. We enjoy all this ecosystem has to offer; its aesthetic, recreational and educational value as a maturing forest far outweigh the tiny financial benefits our school district realizes from timber harvest.</p>

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			<p>This ecosystem is a rare jewel where the Cascades meet the sea and serves as an important wildlife corridor. It's an educational resource and valuable retreat for hiking, climbing, horseback riding, biking, hang gliding and paragliding.</p> <p>I believe the group's recommendations are flawed as a direct result of timber industry influence and DNR's overwhelming deference to their position. The recommendations do not represent the majority of Skagitonians' or Washingtonians' values and should not be adopted. The process should be repeated with the input of geologists and biologists, as well as economic, planning and recreational considerations. The upper slopes of Blanchard contain a tiny portion of Skagit County 's harvestable timber. It's time to acknowledge that these upper slopes have unique qualities that make them inappropriate for additional logging.</p> <p>My voice joins the chorus of others insisting on appropriate protection of Blanchard Mountain . I think it's time for Skagit County and DNR to move toward a more balanced and long-term view of managing our resources. Let's put more importance on our children's healthy futures and less on the short-term benefits of our timber industry.</p>
EM-60	Jeff Tellefsen	Whatcom Co. resident	<p>I just wanted to send a quick comment on this Blanchard mountain debate. I am a life long Whatcom Co. resident and have just started noticing all the signs and attention given to this Mountain. I can understand some peoples concerns however this is has been logged before and has come back as it is today. I think that with the best attention to all the environmental rules that apply I see no reason for a healthy harvest of this timber. I have seen and been involved in the harvest of many cuts around lake Samish near this mt . Seeing Alger and the Lake sammish area cut in time segments and replanted it is blending in very well and looks great. I give a full on ok with this harvest and am anxious to see how it can be done and done well.</p>
EM-61	Erik Stark	Bow Resident	<p>Thank you for taking the time to talk with me at the Blanchard Forest Strategies Group Open</p>

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			<p>House. I appreciate the hard work of the group and DNR's effort to work with conservationists, but after careful consideration I need to express opposition to the recommendations. I feel the group's final recommendations are inappropriately influenced by timber interests and the small size of the core management area, construction of any new roads and the design of the Blanchard Forest Advisory Committee are all unacceptable. It is important for me to comment on the recommendations since my children are educated in the Burlington Edison School District, I live at the base of Blanchard, hike its trails, and hold a degree in environmental and stream biology. Of equal importance is my role as a local physician and advocate for many families supported by the timber industry.</p> <p>I agree with you that Skagit County needs to carefully manage open space and the pressures of urbanization, and that the timber industry is an important part of our community and heritage. But I reject the concept that the upper reaches of Blanchard Mountain must be a "working forest". The economic value of Blanchard's timber is its least valuable asset, and it is an insignificant portion of the harvestable timber in Skagit County. The school revenue derived from timber harvest on Blanchard is also insignificant, especially when weighed against the educational value of the area if it is preserved for our students to enjoy in its most natural state. The final recommendations do not adequately protect the upper reaches of the Mountain, or reflect the values of the majority of Skagitonians or the citizens of Washington.</p> <p>Decisions about management of Blanchard should be based on a careful balance of recreational and economic concerns. The timber industry has the privilege to do the bidding of the people of Skagit Valley and Washington State after decisions of where and when to harvest on Blanchard are made. Just as employees of State Liquor Stores don't dictate policy about hours of operation or location of stores and a building contractor doesn't dictate the size of a new home, the timber industry should not have a role in deciding the fate of Blanchard Mountain. The logging industry may be Skagit County's oldest child but, just like a good parent doesn't favor the</p>

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			oldest child, it's time to accept and value our county's other "children". Sharon Dillon's election is an example of the other children demanding a voice. It's time to listen. I know the pressure to protect our timber industry is strong, but its time for DNR to acknowledge public opinion on Blanchard. In spite of the Strategies Group's hard work, "thumbs sideways" is not good enough for this special place. Eric Stark, MD
<b>LETTERS</b>			
L-1	Annie Prevost Bob Lemon		<p>We are writing in support of the preservation of Blanchard Mountain, Skagit County, and the Chuckanut Mtns., Whatcom County, as a natural and recreational resource. This is a very special place, the only place where the mountains connect to the sea. This refuge of near wilderness is what makes this such a unique and beautiful place to live. It is a place of wildness, of old growth pockets and diverse habitat for many species, including salmon, steelhead, bats, and marbled murrelets, a threatened seabird. All are being crowded out by our increasingly urban world.</p> <p>Times have changed, what used to be seen as just more trees to be logged is now treasured as a wilderness experience that's right in our backyards! Because of their low elevation, Blanchard Mountain and the adjacent Chuckanut Mtns. Are accessible to be enjoyed all year long by hikers, backcountry horsemen, mountain bikers, fishermen, birders, hand/para gliders and native plant enthusiasts to name a few.</p> <p>The partnership for Puget Sound initiative includes restoring damaged forests, rivers, shorelines and marine waters. Here we have a beautiful, intact gem that merely needs to be saved. That is far, far less costly than spending billions to restore environments that are already degraded and polluted.</p> <p>In addition, World Wildlife Fund has identified the Puget Lowland Forest Ecoregion as one in critical need of new protected areas. Mt. Blanchard and the Chuckanuts are the only natural area left between Blaine and Olympia.</p> <p>We had intended to write urging preservation of Blanchard Mountain. Now the proposal to</p>

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			<p>create a Chuckanut Mountain Park District has come up. We embrace that as the very best way to preserve his unique natural resource. If this gem of an area was anywhere else in the nation it would be a park already.</p> <p>DNR lands are public lands “held in trust for all of the people”. We can find other ways to fund schools, but we can’t replace rare and endangered species once they are lost. Sentiment has shifted to preserving this natural treasure for all the people to enjoy. Once the hard work of protecting this area is complete, we will proudly promote is as the natural gem of the north Washington coast.</p> <p>We urge you to help protect this area, as much of it as possible, in any way possible. Protect Blanchard first if need be. But we believe a Chuckanut Mountain Park District is the very best solution.</p>
L-2	John M. Simon	Bow-Edison Resident	<p>A Chuckanut of an Idea</p> <p>A commons park, funded by a donation toll between the Blanchard bridge (north of Bow) and the Whatcom Fire Station. At \$5.00 per motor vehicle, the park could earn \$10,000 a day or 365,000 per year. This is I believe, a low estimate, and could additionally be bucked up by other donations and grants.</p> <p>The money collected would go toward road maintenance, park protection, salaries and education. We have a precious gem that could pay for itself and be enjoyed by all.</p> <p>A state ranger would oversee a committee of seven made up of volunteers from Skagit and Whatcom counties, especially from Blanchard, Bow and even Bellingham. These volunteers will be true representatives for the common good.</p> <p>We, the people, can maintain the park, save the mountains and restore the salmon and trout streams the mountains feed.</p>

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			Imagine the revenue from tourism and ecotourism. Ask your kids if they want to go fishing!  The common park would be tax free.
L-3 (See CC-28)			
L-4	Virginia Walsh	Mount Vernon Resident	I think Blanchard Mountain should be protected because it makes it possible for Skagit Valley residents to enjoy the beauty and the wonderful environment of the North Cascades easily. Citizens of Skagit County and others, can take a pleasant hike without first having to drive many miles to reach the mountains. I consider this mountain to be a wonderful asset to the community.
L-5	Jennifer TaylorMixon	Sedro-Woolley Resident	<p>I would like to express my opinion about the future of the Blanchard Mountain area and the Forest State Trust lands that have been under consideration by the Blanchard Forest Strategies Group. I believe that the Department of Natural Resources has an obligation to manage these lands not just for the revenue, but as a good steward for the needs of the ecosystem as well.</p> <p>I support the designation of these lands in a way that offers the protection of a Natural Resources Conservation Area. I believe that the “core” needs to be increased from 1600 acres closer to the requested 2800 acres. It is important that there be a large enough core forest to support and preserve the diversity on the mountain. Too small of a protected area begins to lose its value. I do not believe that an agreement to support the timber industry can be in the best interest of these lands.</p> <p>It is critical that any logging done near and around this protected core must be done in such a way as to not seriously impact the ecosystem and all of its inhabitants. Further I would like to</p>

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			<p>see this Natural Resource connected with other parcels in Whatcom and Skagit county for a continuous wildlife corridor reaching both north/south and east/west. The correct management of this corridor will require careful oversight.</p> <p>This beautiful and wild area has a unique importance in this county and must be protected. We cannot afford to see this area compromised. I believe that a biodiversity study could contribute essential information to this ongoing process and should not be overlooked.</p>
L-6	John M. Simon	Edison Resident	<p>I hope I will remember you to do the right thing.</p> <p>The Town Meeting about Blanchard Mountain was well attended, with few, if any politicians. Tables with literature and maps showing “A working forest” strategy lined the walls. I appreciated the large lettering plastic covered posters telling their plans.</p> <p>I was impressed with the whole event which must have been put together by the “Strategies Group”. They must have spent Lots of money on the campaign. Probably more than for all the trees on the mountain.</p> <p>Once the forest is gone, then it will be worth much more. It would be a great place to live, just ask the people on Colony Mountain to the south. Blanchard Mountain could never be developed, no matter how much money was offered. The DNR would see to that. A little open space on the top would be nice.</p> <p>I was alarmed to see only one table representing “The Friends of Blanchard Mountain”. Even it was for the token “Core”, or mountain top plan. Two men behind the table wore the appropriate yellow name tags. I had to call them traitors and asked how they were paid off. I once knew them. I said the whole Chuckanut Range is a Common’s Park. It is the peoples land and not for sale. This majestic range is one of a kind of this planet. It is Priceless.</p>

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L-7	John M. Hayes		<p>While attending your February 12, 2007 Blanchard Forest Strategy Group Open House, I realized the pressure you, the DNR, must feel from the “no logging group”. I for one strongly recommend that the DNR continue logging the full area except for the 1600 acre core set aside. This seems like a fair compromise. Just don’t let them increase this core.</p> <p>I for one don’t mind seeing areas on our mountains being logged. There is usually a good patten of old and new growth in varying stages to show well used healthy forest lands. Continued logging is important. Done properly it improves the habitat for wildlife.</p> <p>I appreciate being invited to the open house and being able to comment. I also appreciate the work the DNR and the strategy group has done. Thank you.</p>
L-8	Duncan Burns & Analiese Burns		<p>We urge you to consider greater protection for the Blanchard Mountain area currently under review for new Washington Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) management strategies. As life-long residents of Bellingham, we value the Blanchard Mountain area for its beauty, recreation, and important wildlife functions. Using the area for forestry is shortsighted and selfish. Although forestry is considered a “renewable resource”, the habitat, recreational opportunities, ecosystem functions, and natural beauty will take hundreds of years to recover from logging – if they recover at all. This is not the time to at in hast. Please require more protection or additional studies before approving of the WDNR management strategies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Require more emphasis on environmental protection: Economic and social interests are well represented, but environmental aspects are virtually ignored;</li> <li>• Extend the “Core to maintain a protected corridor from the eastern boundary to the marine waters: Blanchard Mountain functions as the last intact habitat corridor connecting the mountains with the ocean. The Whatcom County Critical Areas Ordinance recognizes this area as the “Chuckanut Wildlife Corridor”. The current plan does not maintain a corridor, instead it creates isolated pockets of protection;</li> <li>• Require additional habitat studies or protect additional area: Few, if any, studies exist on the location and extent of habitat critical for wildlife and plants. Without these studies, we cannot know what areas need protection. We do know; however,</li> </ul>



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			<p>that State protected species and Whatcom County species of local importance are associated with the Blanchard Mountain area;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Separate habitat areas from recreational areas: Habitat areas need to be separated from recreation. Most habitat functions are not compatible with human intrusion such as hiking, biking, pet use, or logging;</li> <li>• Do not act in haste: If logged, restoration of mature forests takes hundreds of years.</li> </ul> <p>Thank you for your help in maintaining one of our greatest assets. We appreciate your efforts.</p>
L-9	Jan Gordon	Colony Road resident	<p>After attending the open house, looking at maps and talking to Bill Wallace, I was rather in shock and wondered what was going in those hours and months of meetings. The amount of money the schools and county receive from the destruction of one of our last greatest places is a pittance; (2 or 3 average homes in Skagit, a couple of minutes in Iraq, the commissioners' legal budget for a few years). Surely this money could be raised in better ways, perhaps by eliminating waste and legal fees. This is not good use of natural treasures.</p> <p>Bill explained that even the core was open to logging and building "temporary" roads at the DNR's discretion. So nothing is really protected. Bill also tried to sell me on the idea that recreating in a "working forest" was educational and interesting, when I pointed out that the main trail was open for logging. Who of us has not had the experience of a clear cut? We don't want that as part of our time in nature. According to the maps, it appears that appearance, particularly from Samish Island, is more important than ecology, recreation, wildlife habitat.</p> <p>As one who has spent much time on Blanchard, I know that logging and recreation don't mix well. Log trucks on steep narrow roads create a danger to hikers, drivers, and particularly horsemen. There have never been warning signs, and log truck drivers are always rushing to meet their quotas.</p>

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			<p>I do like the idea of buying up potential development land to have a sustainable harvest rather than untried sprawl. I do not like the idea of buying up the square of private land to the west of oyster creek surrounded by what is the “protected core”. The Oyster Creek people are hardly developers and since that piece is surrounded by private land and “protected” land it doesn’t make sense to force out private owners. Perhaps it now makes sens why they (the property owners) keep being denied their permits, the DNR wants their trees. All in all, I am very disappointed in this plan, which offers little, except keeping the views for people who don’t bother to go there, and for the logging industry.</p> <p>There needs to be a moratorium on all logging and road buildling until we can find a way to transfer this unique and environmentally necessary gem to trust lands with the Nature Conservancy or some other park purposes.</p> <p>I apologize for my lack of word processor, I am a simple soul.</p>
L-10 (See EM-9)			
L-11	Frank Ancock	Bellingham resident	<p>I am writing this note to comment on the Blanchard Forest Plan. I believe that we should not just look at the next 5 years but at the next 50 or 100 years. I think that the Blanchard core area should become a part of Larrabee State Park. This area, is only place in Skagit and Whatcom County where we could have a larger Park on the saltwater. So we should think of making a good part of the DNR Blanchard land into Parkland for the future.</p>